

Commentary

Volume Fifty-eight, Number Four, October 1974

Why Ethnicity?

**NATHAN GLAZER AND
DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN**

Guerrillas & Terrorists	Walter Laqueur
From Plato to Las Vegas	Jack Richardson
Women and Success	Sonya Rudikoff
What Jewish Studies Can Do	Robert Alter
Susan Sontag's Israel	Edward Grossman

Books in Review: Peter L. Berger / B.H. Haggin /
Eva Hoffman / Samuel McCracken /
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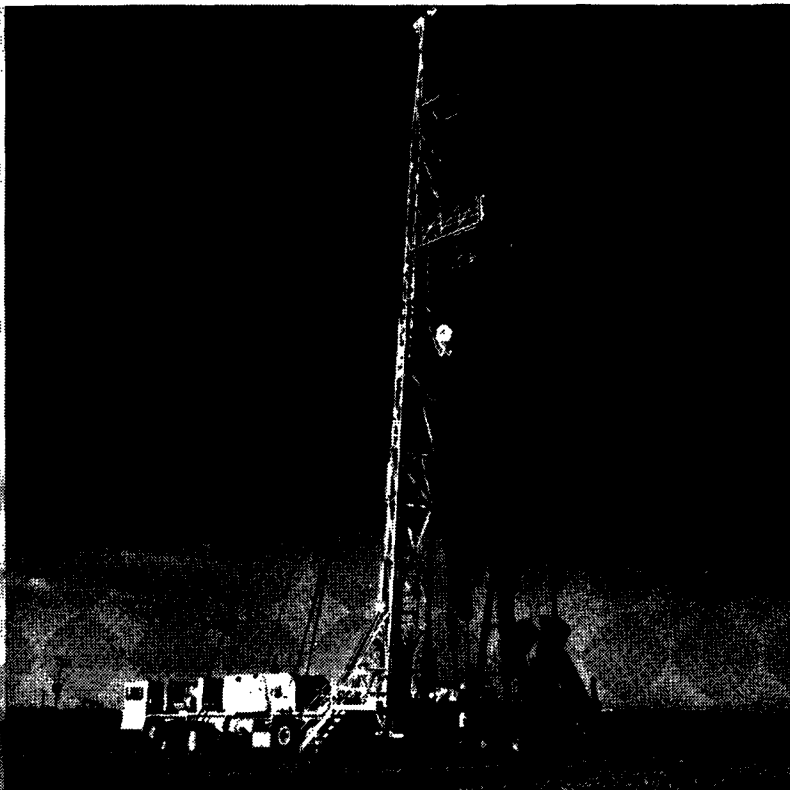
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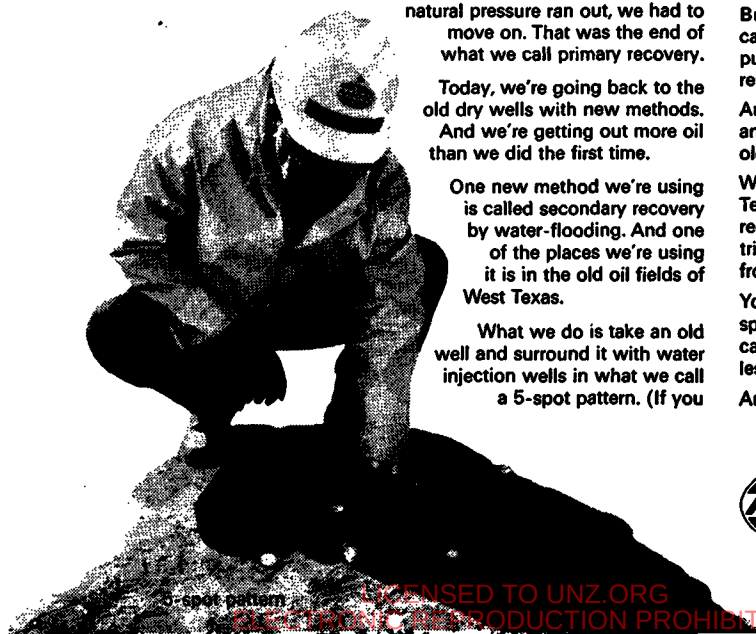
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Commentary

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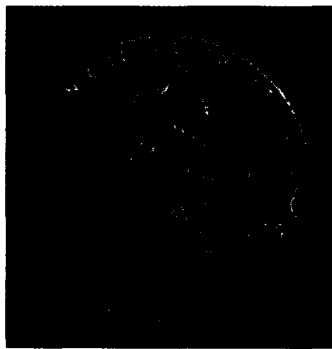
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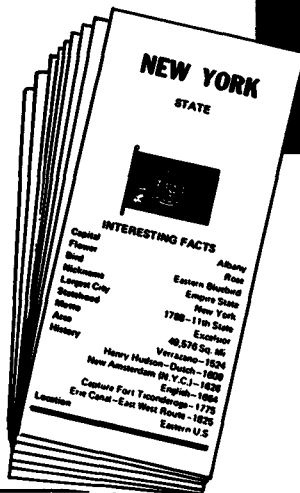
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Letters from Readers

Détente

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

... Theodore Draper ["Détente," June] advances important points with great sensitivity to the complexities involved, but he also is tempted to wander afield. He draws a revealing distinction, for example, between sweeping "maximal" and unembellished "minimal" détente, and justifiably chides administration officials for their groundless euphoria when they claimed in 1972 that President Nixon had laid a solid framework for the future development of American-Soviet relations by negotiating "maximal" détente. Once this official assessment in Washington descended to a more sober level, however, following the October 1973 Arab assault on Israel, Mr. Draper goes on to belittle the new "minimal" détente as well: "In effect, it reduced the concept of détente to little more than the avoidance of nuclear war between the superpowers." I for one am quite happy not to be part of a nuclear war; it needs to be explained to me why this is not a real accomplishment.

Mr. Draper tosses brickbats most energetically at Henry Kissinger, whose chief sins, he argues, have been: first, changing his mind; and second, failing as a general theoretician. For years Professor Kissinger argued that alliance with Western Europe should be the keystone of American policy, and, as a corollary, any diplomatic move toward détente between Washington and Moscow should be regarded with utmost suspicion. Presidential Adviser Kissinger suddenly changed course to support the Nixon line of détente with Russia and China, even at a time when Washington's relations with the NATO allies were creaking with tension. This much Mr. Draper documents with precision. But readers are left to guess for themselves the reasons for Kissinger's shifts in stance. How about proper differences between academic and policymaking roles? Is it not reasonable for a professor to exploit his politically independent station to articulate criticism a Presidential adviser "on the team" could not possibly voice? Would Mr. Draper himself be immune from official role pres-

ures were the next President to invite him to the White House basement? Or how about changes in the world? Mr. Draper himself cites evidence (from strategist Albert Wohlstetter) that due to improvements in the art of battle with conventional weaponry, the "threshold of nuclear war" now has been raised. Other relevant changes can be pointed to: loss of domestic support in the U.S. for the Indochina intervention, preparatory moves toward détente with Moscow by France and Germany, the end of anarchy in China's Cultural Revolution, the Soviet buildup on the Chinese border, potential decline of productivity in the Soviet economy, Sheik Yamani's aggressive posture, and more. Mr. Draper fails to consider whether these changes might not have had something to do with Kissinger's change of heart. Rather, he circumspectly intimates that Kissinger has done wrong. Personally, I feel safer having a politically flexible Presidential adviser who can alter his analysis to fit the times as he sees them than a doctrinaire strategist who insists that his books of two decades past still remain fresh as a daisy.

These days, high-level "theory" in the academic discipline of international relations can only be described as a sorry mess. The literature contains an embarrassing collection of hothouse computer models, legerdemain with abstract systemic concepts, and fascinating historical case studies demonstrating in a variety of contexts the folly, cruelty, and occasional wisdom of those empowered to be the world's foreign policymakers. To suggest with Mr. Draper that Kissinger's "most vulnerable aspect" is his conceptual framework and theorizing is not to fault the Secretary alone but rather to fault social science as a whole for its inability to generalize about intractable international problems. . . .

Finally I must question Mr. Draper's characterizing as "a dubious proposition" the Nixon contention that in the late 20th century America's destiny will move westward toward Asia. This assumption strikes me as eminently reasonable, not dubious; it should provide a reliable starting point for future foreign-policy planning. America's last three major wars

have been fought in Asia; Asia is the fastest growing region in the world economically; U.S. agricultural exports for the past few years have begun to go principally to Asian markets; India is the latest member of the nuclear club; Japan has become such an economic giant that it should soon take its place on the UN Security Council as a full-fledged diplomatic participant in world affairs; and the region is rich in resources. The United States inescapably is a Pacific power. Before Pearl Harbor this fact was not pressing in Washington, but all that has changed now. Europe and Asia increasingly must share the limelight. . . .

GORDON BENNETT

University of Texas
Austin, Texas

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Theodore Draper's basic error . . . is to label all species of U.S.-Soviet cooperation as "détente," a much abused term. As a result, in Mr. Draper's view, the attempt to modify the Soviet outlook and build a closer relationship with Moscow is bound to end in disappointment and a net political loss for the West, regardless of the techniques employed and the motives, goals, and expectations involved. This kind of broad brush stroke serves conveniently to discredit Dr. Kissinger.

For example, Mr. Draper quotes liberally from those writings of Kissinger which clearly question whether any solid, enduring benefit can be derived from *ad hoc* summitry and vague stabs at improving the atmosphere. But contrary to Mr. Draper's thesis, Kissinger's wariness on this score does not contradict his policy of negotiating understandings and agreements on specific issues with China and the Soviet Union. True, both may be manifestations of détente, but they spring from different motives and their effects are not likely to be the same. In short, one may be suspicious of the spirits which wafted ever so briefly above Camp David and Glassboro, New Jersey, while at the same time endeavoring to deal in a concrete way with traditional adversaries.

As the crowning example of what he calls "détente politics," Mr. Draper cites the "Basic Principles" signed in Moscow at the end of President Nixon's visit in May 1972. As for this declaration, it is not even a formal treaty, subject to ratification. One must grant



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that Kissinger and his staff, perhaps over-enthusiastically, put forward some rather heady interpretations on the way home. But Mr. Draper goes too far in insisting that this single document lulled the government to sleep. After all the years of mutual distrust, brinkmanship, and competition for arms and influence in the world, we are asked to believe that the government, and Kissinger as a realist *par excellence*, put blind faith in this piece of paper. American intelligence agents may have erred abysmally, but surely their reading of Soviet intentions was not based exclusively on the "Basic Principles." Anyway, Sadat had been rattling sabers for years, without palpable consequence. Even Israel, with reportedly one of the best intelligence systems in the world, was caught by surprise. If the feeling was that Sadat would continue to hold back, then logically there could not have been much worry about a possible Soviet role in acquiescing in Egyptian hostilities, particularly in view of the fact that Sadat had ordered the recall of thousands of Soviet military technicians and it was plausible to assume that Soviet influence was on the wane. Thus to attribute to the "Basic Principles" and to détente alone this miscalculation of Egyptian motives and of possible Soviet involvement is far-fetched, to say the least.

What is more than far-fetched is Mr. Draper's related conclusion that by nature the "Basic Principles" were intended to prevent, should have prevented, and were expected to prevent, a third-party conflict such as the Arab attack. In retrospect, it seems obvious that Sadat's plans were conceived over a long stretch of time and that he would have attacked anyway, regardless of the "Basic Principles" and the Soviet reaction. But this does not render the agreement invalid. The agreement is bilateral and cannot influence the conduct of third parties except to the extent that the signatories may, by their own behavior, exert an influence on them, which may or may not be of consequence. In this situation it is more than likely that the Kremlin was faced with a Sadat determined to renew the war, and that Soviet leaders felt they had little or no leverage, one way or the other. So they may have elected to go along with the inevitable and stay on the good side of an important client state. While the

terms of the "Basic Principles" may have been stretched to the limit in this instance by the Soviet role (which, however, may have been more ambiguous and less sinister than Mr. Draper makes out), the author exaggerates the relevance, meaning, and expectation of the agreement in order to show that it and détente failed the West.

It is a matter of some interest in this connection that both Mr. Nixon and Dr. Kissinger, in holding forth on détente, candidly repeated in public that no agreement can be expected to remove all differences between this country and the Soviet Union, now or in the future. For this reason conflicts are bound to arise. It is the purpose of understandings and agreements not to accomplish the impossible but to build on each side an instinct and compulsion to consult, so as to avoid misunderstanding and to preclude situations where a confrontation escalates to the point where neither party is left with an acceptable way out. The central question is whether Soviet leaders will increasingly moderate optimal objectives when these threaten good relations with the United States (which have brought benefit to the USSR) or when they risk a confrontation with unpredictable results. Kissinger's policy has a chance of success if indeed the Kremlin proves more and more attentive to new national interests which are by nature antithetical to an unremitting, secretive, aggressive stance.

Curiously, far from ruining the credibility of this kind of détente, history may well record that the U.S.-Soviet moves and contacts during the October war demonstrated the validity of the approach. . . . When the battlefield scene shifted, the Soviets were deterred from sending troops. There was constant communication. And while it is true that the U.S.-Soviet relationship during the conflict may have unfolded in exactly the same manner as it did without the "Basic Principles," I daresay it could not have happened without the emergence of shared interests between the two powers, a détente policy pursued by the Nixon administration for many years previous. The fact that threats were reportedly issued at the height of the crisis, and that Mr. Nixon ordered a state of alert, does not disprove the point. . . .

This rationale, with its realistic

assessment of what was possible, seemed clear enough back in 1972, except evidently to Mr. Draper, who now discerns a "minimal version of détente" and a "new party line" in light of the war, which he alleges embarrassed official Washington. It is too bad that Mr. Draper does not carry the record much further, for apparently the Russians have not sought to obstruct U.S. peacemaking efforts since the truce took effect, and one might even say that they do not now see much to be gained by goading the Syrians or the other more extreme elements into an uncompromising posture. . . .

But even if Mr. Draper is correct in assuming that all recent expressions of détente are foolhardy and perilous, we are left with the question: what are the alternatives? First, there is no alternative to attempting to reach mutually beneficial agreements with the other side. Second, Mr. Draper seems to treat the question as an either/or proposition and opts for Europe first. But surely, as one of the two major nuclear powers, such an approach is potentially disastrous for the United States. And while Mr. Draper is correct in denouncing the government for neglect of and hypocrisy toward our European allies, this is a situation which should be amenable to correction without jeopardizing relations with either Peking or Moscow. Furthermore, I would wager that if all Western European ministries were asked whether the United States should suspend efforts at accommodation with Peking and Moscow, their answer would be a uniform no. It is not bridge-building as such that alienates Europeans but U.S. indifference to the fact that their fate, directly or indirectly, is inextricably bound up in these bilateral affairs which, in turn, gives them a claim to help shape and set the perimeters of détente. Their cause in this respect is just, and I agree with Mr. Draper that it is in our interest to respond to it.

WILLIAM H. VAN DEN TOORN
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Theodore Draper's comprehensive article was informative, provocative, and, to be sure, timely. One has to question to some extent, however, his looking back at Henry Kissinger, the professor. The Secretary of State is obviously forced to incorporate the political realities of the moment with the

Chaim Gross

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pragmatic concerns of the administration. It should not surprise us that his past attitudes are not running the show. . . .

WILLIAM M. TAYLOR
San Anselmo, California

THEODORE DRAPER writes:

Gordon Bennett asks why the concept of détente as "little more than the avoidance of nuclear war between the superpowers" should not be regarded as a "real accomplishment." The answer is that détente cannot be given the credit for making Mr. Bennett quite hap-

py on this score. The avoidance of nuclear war is based on much deeper and older factors than are present in the current version of détente. Nuclear wars, after all, have been avoided since 1945, throughout the "cold war" as well as during the present détente. To be worthy of the name, détentes must do more than avoid nuclear war. In fact, détente was given credit—before October 1973—for doing far more.

Dr. Kissinger must be defended against the imputation that any of his shortcomings, assuming there

are any, should be attributed to the "sorry mess" in which the academic discipline of international relations allegedly finds itself. He at least never wasted his time on "hothouse computer models" and the like. In any case, one cannot defend Dr. Kissinger's "conceptual framework and theorizing" and also beg indulgence for them as a reflection of his discipline's "sorry mess."

Mr. Bennett also raises the question whether détente is a means or an end. The Soviet leaders clearly view détente as a continuation of policy; American leaders have often given the impression that they view it as a substitute for policy. Means and ends here are inextricable; I would not pose the issue in the form of a dichotomy. It is good to "relax tension," which is all that détente means, but it is no great feat to relax tension if you are willing to do so on your opponent's terms. Détente is not an end in itself, nor is it altogether a means. One way to think of it is as a transitional stage from somewhere to somewhere. Everything depends on where you came from and where you are going.

As for Mr. Bennett's last paragraph, if our manifest destiny is still in Asia, we might as well resign ourselves to a fourth major war there and write off our rapprochement with China as a temporary aberration.

William H. van den Toorn seems to have the habit of stating an issue so that his argument self-destructs in mid-sentence.

In his second sentence, for example, he chooses to interpret my position as rejecting any closer relationship with Moscow, "regardless of the techniques employed and the motives, goals, and expectations involved." Mr. van den Toorn lost me as soon as he got to "regardless." Far from disregarding techniques, motives, goals, and expectations—and especially concrete results—I regard them as crucial. Détente is what détente does or whatever is done in its name.

Another example of Mr. van den Toorn's peculiar use of clauses comes in his discussion of the "Basic Principles." He writes: "The agreement is bilateral and cannot influence the conduct of third parties except to the extent that the signatories may, by their own behavior, exert an influence on them, which may or not be of consequence." The catch here begins with the word "except." If the

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"Basic Principles" did not concern the behavior of the two signatories vis-à-vis third parties, the principles would have been meaningless.

Both Mr. Bennett and Mr. Taylor seem to think that there is something unfair about "looking back at Henry Kissinger, the professor," as the latter puts it. I wonder whether Dr. Kissinger would appreciate this kind of protective bifurcation of his career. It would mean that what he wrote and believed for a decade and a half as an academic would no longer have to be taken seriously because he did not have to "incorporate the political realities of the moment." This attitude would countenance the abandonment of one's deepest convictions as soon as one moved to the White House.

Some things have changed since 1969. But not everything. When I cited Professor Kissinger's grave warning in 1965 that the failure to develop a common Western policy, the tendency of Western leaders to "stake their prestige on their ability to woo their Soviet counterparts," and their propensity for making "excessive claims" would be "suicidal for the West," I took for granted that its author did not mean to have us take these words seriously for only four more years or until he saw the world from the White House basement. Was I wrong? If so, most of what Dr. Kissinger wrote before 1969 would have to be written off as academic frippery.

Does it really matter whether I or anyone else would be "immune from official role pressure" in that basement? Our immunity or lack of it would tell something about us; it would not make anything we had previously written more or less true in the least. As I made clear in my article, I cited Dr. Kissinger's past writings because he said so well what needed to be said. My concern is not for mere consistency; it is for an understanding of the larger issues which Dr. Kissinger once understood so well. It is one thing to say that Dr. Kissinger began to see the world differently once he got into the White House basement; it is another thing to say that the world necessarily changed all that much because he did. It should be remembered that the reputation which brought him into the White House was made before 1969 by precisely the kind of thinking which is now being passed off as an outmoded academic exercise.

Politics & Poetry

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

An exchange in your July letters columns concerning "Sylvia Plath Reconsidered" by John Romano [April] raises an issue of such large interest that perhaps you will allow me to add a few words. The issue has to do with, though is not precisely the same as, the appropriateness of Plath's use of concentration-camp images in a poem attacking her father.

Roger N. Hofmann writes that Plath's use of Nazi imagery in writing about her father is "valid" because "in the dawning consciousness of a child" that kind of "highly authoritarian parent" can appear as a figure of "fearful disapproval," one "capable of cruelty." No doubt; but does this render an adequate ground for invoking the father as a Nazi? What, one may wonder, did Plath's father do—more important, what does her poetry show or tell us about him—that makes such a comparison plausible or persuasive?

Mr. Hofmann speaks of "the dawning consciousness of a child,"

but it seems most unlikely that images of Nazis would present themselves to that consciousness; it is the grown-up writer, Sylvia Plath, who is drawing them from sources of public experience. And if it is said that she does this in order to *represent* the child's "dawning consciousness" of a cruel father, then I would reply that she is smuggling into that consciousness highly charged references alien to it and that she is failing as a writer insofar as she does not provide, explicitly or implicitly, some critical judgment of or some ironic dissociation from what she would have us suppose the child perceives. In short, the unwarranted fusion of child's response and grown-ups' references makes for either melodrama or self-pity: which may come to the same thing.

Carole Stone writes: "Is the fate of the Jews in camps a fate that can never be duplicated? Cannot one individual's psyche approximate the suffering of a people? Or must one keep one's hands off such images because they are the chosen images of a chosen people?"

I leave aside the spiritual del-

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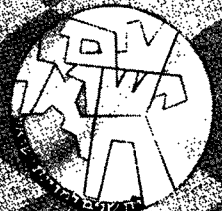
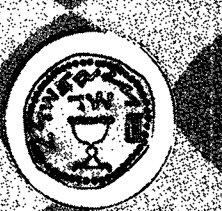
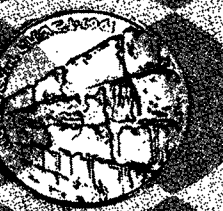
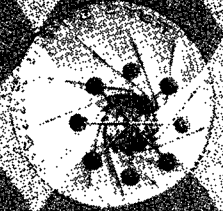
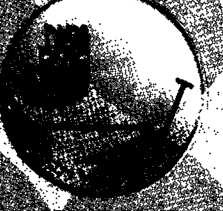
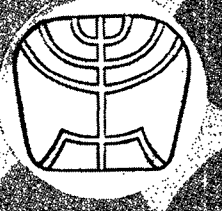
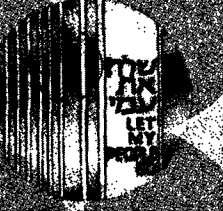
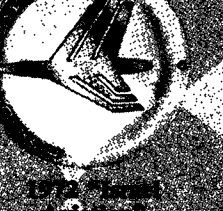
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icacy revealed in that last phrase, except to remark that the Jews in Auschwitz and Dachau didn't exactly "choose" these images, nor have those Jews who have lived beyond Auschwitz and Dachau.

That dreadful events in an individual's psyche may approximate the sufferings of a people is indeed possible, but again it might be good to remember that Jews in the camps didn't merely "suffer": they were gassed and burned. Anyone—poet, novelist, commentator—who uses images of the camps in order to evoke personal traumas ought to have a very precise sense of the enormity of what he or she is suggesting. He or she ought to have enough moral awareness and literary control to ask whether the object and the image have any congruence.

A simple comparison. I am miserable because my father has mistreated me, or my lover has abandoned me, or I regard myself as a failure and unworthy; but that does not yet warrant my declaring that the world has come to an end. There is a large difference between my private condition of unhappiness and the public fate of the world, and if I confuse the two, mature readers will rightly grow impatient with my aggrandizements and/or delusions.

Is it possible that the condition of the Jews in the camps can be duplicated? Yes (and probably by other Jews). But it is decidedly unlikely that it was duplicated in a middle-class family living in Wellesley, Massachusetts, even if it had a very bad daddy indeed. A Solzhenitsyn writing about Gulag Archipelago, or an Akhmatova about its human costs, might with some reason invoke the Nazi camps though even there they might do well to hesitate. But a sensitive and talented young writer growing up in an *American* academic town? No; that shows a lack of proportion, a failure in judgment such as might indeed be characteristic of a very disturbed person meriting our sympathy, but will not do in the work of a poet declared to be a major voice.

More important, to condone such a confusion is to delude ourselves as to the nature of our personal miseries and their relationship to—or relative magnitude when placed against—the most dreadful event in the history of mankind.

IRVING HOWE
New York City

Theories of Crime

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The distinction James Q. Wilson makes between "causal analysis" and "policy analysis" ["Crime and the Criminologists," July] may have some immediate practical value that eludes me, but it is ultimately untenable, and harmful to the very policy research which he advocates to help us reduce crime.

The focal problem is not that the sociologists he criticizes (Sutherland and Cressey; Cloward and Ohlin) deal with "ultimate causes" or that "attempts to explain the causes of crime . . . lead inevitably into the realm of the subjective and the familial. . . ." There are no ultimate causes in scientific work, but merely causes at different levels of generality. And there is a mountain of evidence from demographic, ecological, economic, and cross-national research which in no way reduces to the "subjective" or the "familial."

Criminologists have ignored the central feature (deterrence) of all penal codes since Hammurabi. Agreed. But one cannot account for this by noting that they were trying to explain crime. The secret is much simpler, and Mr. Wilson even suggests what it is. The criminologists were gradually drawn into the conflict between "punishment" and newer forms of "treatment," but as interested parties. They became advocates and spokesmen for the treatment interest and the treatment ideology, and did everything in their power to ridicule the very idea of deterrence. Their close friends in the "helping professions" helped to create a mental climate in which it was scientifically illegitimate even to consider the effects of legal threat in reducing crime.

This obscurantist climate of opinion limited the *kinds* of causes examined, and therefore the kinds of theories which could arise. The problem is not the search for the causes of crime, but limitations on that search arising from extra-scientific sources.

Many sociologists are breaking away from this tradition, but they will not be aided by blanket attacks which purport to tell them what they must "inevitably" find. I cite, for example, the recent work by Travis Hirschi, *The Causes of Delinquency*. He has produced a version of control theory quite amenable to the ideas of rationality and choice in human (includ-

ing delinquent) behavior, but he does not ignore the emotional and passionate side of man.

Those of us interested in deterrence—economists, sociologists, political scientists—have plenty to do, much of it in concert. We start practically at ground zero. I fail to see that we will achieve our goal by substituting the talisman of "policy research" for the arduous work of creating a sound body of theory.

ROBERT MARTINSON
The City College
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In James Q. Wilson's "Crime and the Criminologists" there is a five-line quotation from what is identified as a "review of the more recent literature on deterrence" by Charles R. Tittle and Charles H. Logan. The quotation is from page 385 of their article, "Sanctions and Deviance: Evidence and Remaining Questions," which appeared in Vol. 7, No. 3 (Spring 1973) of the *Law & Society Review*, the quarterly journal of the Law and Society Association. Readers interested in obtaining copies of their article may correspond with Professor James E. Wallace, Executive Secretary, The Law and Society Association, University of Denver College of Law, 200 West 14th Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80204.

MARC GALANTER
Law & Society Review
Buffalo, New York

JAMES Q. WILSON writes:

Robert Martinson, himself a sociologist, supplies an additional reason for the failure of academic criminology to be helpful in dealing with crime—namely, that criminologists are "spokesmen for the treatment interest and the treatment ideology" and have done "everything in their power to ridicule the very idea of deterrence." I agree, though not being as widely acquainted among criminologists as Mr. Martinson, I was reluctant to speak so confidently of their ideological preconceptions.

Unlike Mr. Martinson, however, I persist in my view that the intellectual canons of sociology as generally practiced tend to lead such scholars, whatever their ideology, to a search for the "causes" of crime. Mr. Martinson seems not to understand this, and I doubt that I can explain in a short note what I apparently failed to make clear in a long article. But consider: if,

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in 1910, criminology had begun in this country as a branch of economics instead of as a branch of sociology, I believe its approach to crime would have been very different from what we have seen. Not even politically liberal economists try to explain why some people buy Pintos while others buy Porsches and still others buy bicycles or why some people will do anything for an extra dollar and others will do very little. Instead, they make a very simple assumption: that if the cost of what they want goes down, people will ordinarily consume more of it.

Had economists been given the crime problem, they would not have asked why some people commit crimes and others do not, but what happens to the crime rate when the costs and benefits of a criminal act change. They would not have rejected theory, but only those theories that cannot account for changes in observed behavior.

Contrary to what Mr. Martinson asserts, and contrary to what he would believe if he had to make policy decisions, a theory which can account for the ultimate causes of crime is no more essential to persons making policy about crime than is a theory which can account for the ultimate causes of gravity essential to persons making policy about airplanes.

The British in Palestine

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

James R. Adams devotes most of his review of my book *Battleground: Fact and Fantasy in Palestine* [Books in Review, June] to an attack on my thesis that the first cause of the previously nonexistent Palestine Arab nationalist movement was the British authority in Palestine. I devoted a complete chapter in my book to a comprehensive, if necessarily compact, analysis of the genesis and then the practice of British policy from 1915 on. From Mr. Adams's review nobody would remotely suspect that that analysis is sustained (efficiently or otherwise) by a considerable documentation, that in fact my charge against British policy is supported by much source evidence, that some of this evidence derives from now publicly available British official documents, or that there is perfectly "respectable" British support for my conclusions.

Mr. Adams presumably expects to satisfy your readers' curiosity

about the basis for my proposition by the casual accusation that I am "obsessed" with the idea of British responsibility, and indeed by throwing in the childish suggestion that I am moved by an "inordinate hatred" of the British. This no doubt seems to him a convenient method of sweeping under the rug the mass of evidence (of which my book exposed only a part) of the British engineering of the Arab movement.

Nobody would guess from Mr. Adams's account of my book that, for example, the late R.H.S. Crossman, one of the intellectual giants of the Labour party, a member of the Labour government up to 1970, and regarded as the leading Labour expert on Palestine, had bluntly accused Prime Minister Attlee (1945-51) and Foreign Minister Bevin of having "tried to destroy the Jews of Palestine." (Was Crossman also obsessed, was he too moved by an inordinate hatred of the British?)

How are your readers to suspect that, for example, the diaries and official reports of the Head of British Military Intelligence in Palestine in 1919-20, Col. Richard Meinertzhagen, were sources for my factual narrative, and indeed provide support for my conclusions?

Who would suspect from Mr. Adams's bold—and, as it happens, irrelevant—criticism of my debunking of Lawrence that it derived in part from the brilliant, heavily-documented biography by Richard Aldington, partly from Lawrence's own writings, and partly from recently-opened official British files?

There is not only *suppressio veri* in Mr. Adams's method. There is also *suggestio falsi*. Here are two examples. He writes:

Mr. Katz is obsessed with the idea that British ambitions in the Middle East were the product of the Cairo-based Arab Bureau during World War I. . . . The "Cairo School," Mr. Katz explains, envisaged a loose federation of semi-independent Arab states in historic Arab territory to be protected and presided over by the British.

The fact is that my explanation of what the Cairo School envisaged is not my explanation at all, but a statement of purpose by the guide and mentor of the Cairo School, Sir Reginald Wingate, Governor-General of the Sudan. I quote directly in *Battleground* from his letter to Lord Hardinge of August 26, 1915.

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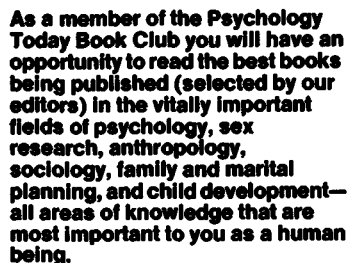
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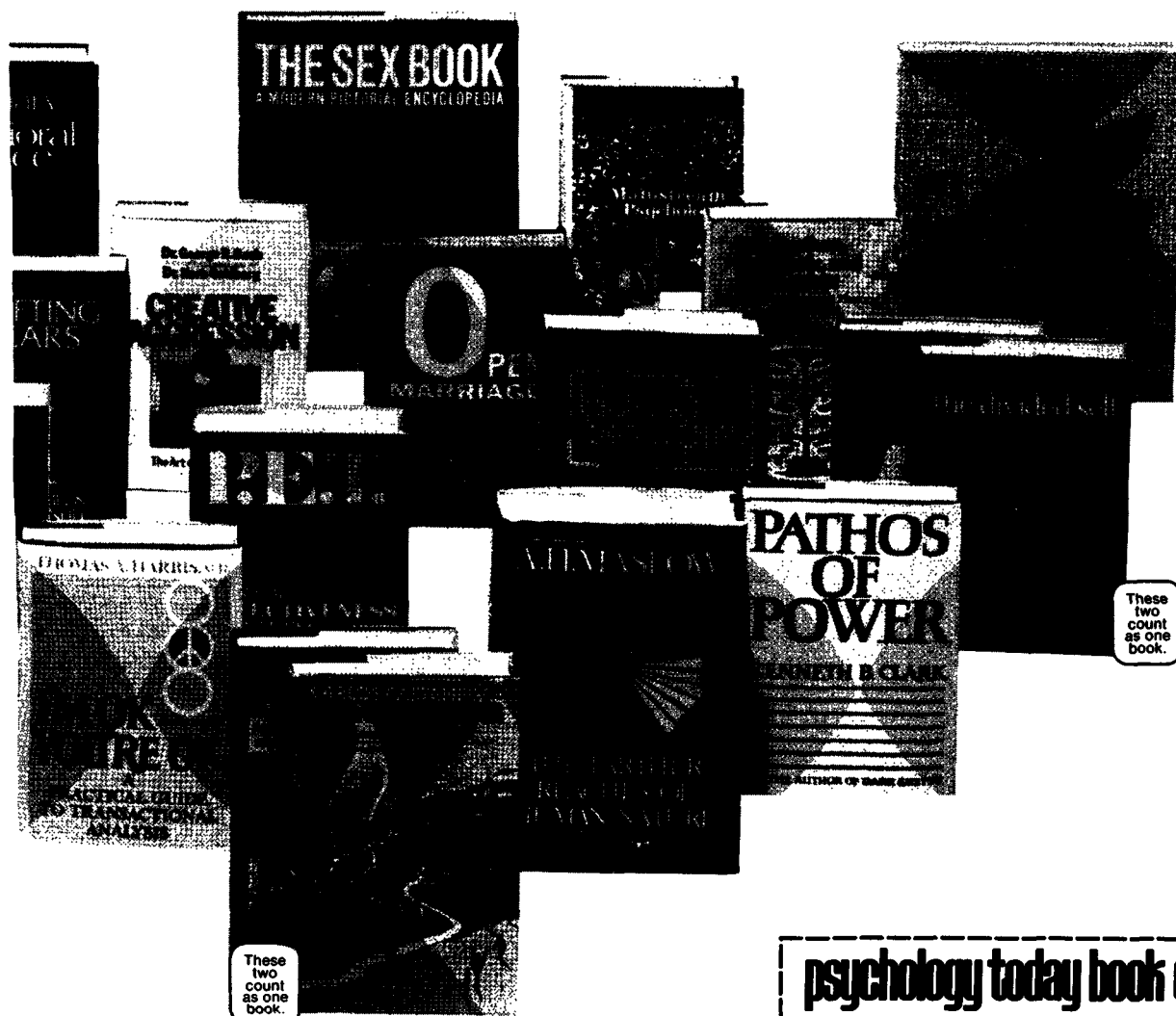
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Even in the paraphrase by Mr. Adams of this passage, there is a twist. Nowhere did I mention (or quote Wingate as mentioning) "historic Arab territory." This is a catch-phrase of Arab propaganda smuggled in whole and thrust upon me by Mr. Adams. I referred to the "vast Arab-speaking areas of the Ottoman Empire."

A second example. Further in the same passage Mr. Adams writes:

But, Katz says, plans for a homogeneous Arab Fertile Crescent were frustrated by the Balfour Declaration and the French claims to Syria. The disciples of the "Cairo School" nevertheless set about "to diddle the French out of Syria" and to undermine the Jewish National Home.

Who would guess from this passage that the phrase in quotation marks, "to diddle the French out of Syria"—a direct charge of moral obloquy—was not a heated product of my aforementioned "obsession"? In fact, it was Lord Milner, a famous member of the British War Cabinet, who made the charge and coined the phrase, and it is quoted in *Battleground* accordingly, hav-

ing been quoted previously by another not unimportant Briton—Prime Minister David Lloyd George.

There is, however, I think, a ray of light in Mr. Adams's attack. He overreaches himself. He writes (apparently with some intent of sarcasm): "One can agree . . . that the Mandate administration's idea of its duties differed vastly from the program of the Zionist Revisionists."

It would surprise Mr. Adams (or maybe it wouldn't) to learn that the program of the Zionist Revisionists was meticulously based on a reading of British undertakings shared by the statesmen responsible for those undertakings such as Lloyd George, Balfour, Lord Robert Cecil, General Smuts, *et al*; and that the British Mandate administration's idea of its duties differed not only from the program of the Zionist Revisionists but from every shade of Zionist opinion, beginning with Weizmann; from that of many British public figures ("a gross breach of faith," said Churchill); and, not least, from that of the League of Nations Mandate Commission which in 1939 de-

clared British policy incompatible with the Mandate—and therefore illegal in the international sense. (Maybe they were, all of them, obsessed, etc.)

There can, however, hardly be intent of sarcasm in the implicit assumption by Mr. Adams that the readers of COMMENTARY are ignorant of, or have forgotten, the agony of the years of the Holocaust, during which, in pursuance of that so-condemned policy of the British government, Palestine was held shut against possible escapees from Hitler's Final Solution—a period symbolized by the *Patria* and the *Struma*; and when Weizmann thus described British policy: "One stands aghast at the attitude which the Palestine government is taking up repeatedly and systematically toward those unfortunate Jewish refugees who flee from the clutches of the German or Rumanian Nazis, try at the risk of their own lives to find refuge in Palestine, and are very often, within sight of its shores, cruelly, inhumanly, driven back into the sea and the jaws of death."

Seemingly incredible is his implicit erasure from memory of the reasons why the British Mandate administration was brought to an end. This did not happen because the British got tired of doing good deeds, but as the result of the resistance of the *Yishuv*, spearheaded indeed by the Irgun and the Lehi and by the Aliyah Bet campaign of the Haganah, but sustained by the Jewish people as a whole. That resistance was supported as well by the disgust and abhorrence in many parts of the civilized world, including the United States and, as I can testify, Britain itself, at the policy pursued by the government—and so trenchantly described by R.H.S. Crossman.

SAMUEL KATZ

Tel Aviv, Israel

JAMES R. ADAMS writes:

Samuel Katz and I both enjoy a good polemic. Consequently I am disappointed that he has not made a stronger case against my review. I would have hoped for him to show how I had simplified or distorted his thesis and then given the rational, historical arguments that I had somehow missed. Instead, quoting R. H. S. Crossman, he drives his case to an extreme even I failed to anticipate. In his book, Mr. Katz traces thirty years of Arab-Zionist conflict in the Man-

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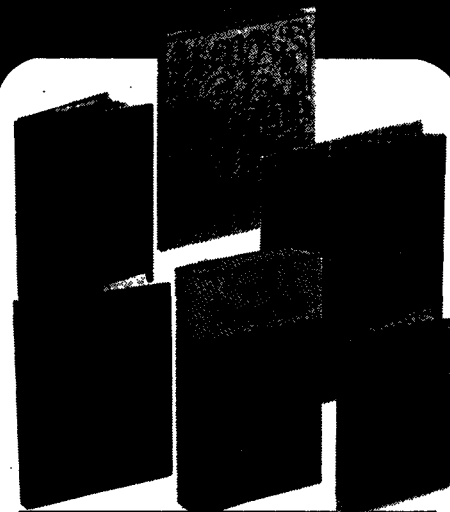
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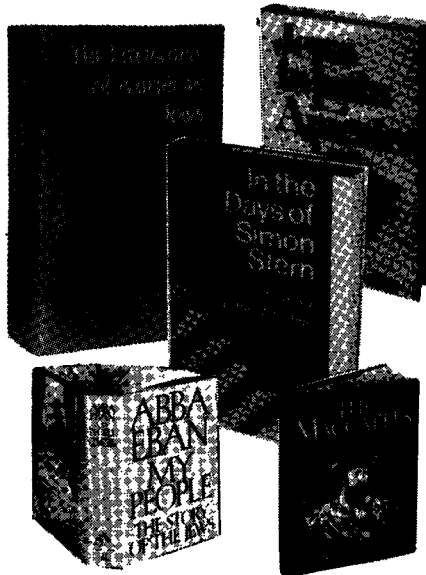
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date to the machinations of a group "almost wholly composed of leaders or disciples of the Cairo School." He writes: "Just as they continued trying to 'biff the French out of Syria,' they applied themselves to biffing the Zionists out of Palestine." In my review I took this for an attempt at historical interpretation, and objected that the personnel of the Arab Bureau, including such firm adherents of "Laurentian pan-Arabism" as Lawrence himself, were by no means the singleminded opponents of Zionism that Mr. Katz made them out to be. Any fair-minded historical analysis, I maintained, would have to admit that British policy was much more confused and inadvertent than Mr. Katz allowed. Mr. Katz, it seems, considers this sort of reasoning to be irrelevant. Instead of presenting a rejoinder to my interpretation, or restating his own, he complains that I didn't acknowledge the "considerable documentation," the "source evidence," and the "perfectly 'respectable' British support" that he cites in his book.

Now the writing of history involves more than accumulating citations. One is expected to account for contrary evidence (rather than dismissing it as Arab propaganda) and to prove that one's own hypothesis is more plausible, comprehensive, and illuminating than the alternatives. Above all, one is expected to evaluate the documents one cites. Mr. Katz does none of this. Instead he hews and hauls material to pile up support for his thesis. Much of his "respectable British support" is misused, and a good deal of his "source evidence" consists of fifty-year-old slander that wasn't proved at the time and hasn't been substantiated since.

Take, for instance, Mr. Katz's treatment of Sir Ronald Storrs. As Oriental Secretary to the British Agency in Egypt, Storrs was a crucial figure in the Arab Bureau; as Military Governor of Jerusalem in 1917 and later its Civil Governor, he would have to be the major link in Mr. Katz's argument. Mr. Katz accuses Storrs of fomenting the 1920 Easter pogrom in Jerusalem and of arranging the appointment of the rabid Hajj Amin al-Husseini as Grand Mufti. The second charge is, I grant, supported by serious scholars. (In fact, Mr. Katz's account of it is largely a rewriting of an essay in Elie Kedourie's *The Chatham House Version and Other Middle Eastern Studies*, which, in-

cidentally, he doesn't footnote.) But his case on the first count, the count on which Mr. Katz makes his most substantial effort at proving the connection between the Cairo Bureau and Arab unrest, is remarkably thin. It consists almost exclusively of accusations made by the political officer of the Palestine Administration, Col. Richard Meinertzhagen (reprinted in his *Middle East Diary, 1917-1958*, London, Cresset Press, 1959). By all accounts, Meinertzhagen was a fascinating character, a Protestant who staunchly supported Zionism, a close friend of Lawrence, a violent man with vehement opinions. But, as I was warned by an eminent Tel Aviv University specialist on the British Mandate, his diaries have to be used with extreme caution. The fact that General Allenby ignored Col. Meinertzhagen's reports looks to Mr. Katz like proof of British complicity in the riots; the more likely explanation is that Meinertzhagen couldn't prove his case, and consequently was not believed.

Furthermore, Mr. Katz totally ignores exculpatory evidence from Zionists who knew Storrs well. The willfulness of his account is glaring in contrast to the balanced and better informed testimony of one of the most prominent Jewish figures of the Mandate government, Professor Norman Bentwich:

At a time of grave trouble, he [Storrs] was unable to take strong and firm action. He would seek some diplomatic solution, that was not possible in a crisis. When there was Arab violence against Jews, he would not use force, and he became the target of Jewish anger; violent abuse was poured on him in the Jewish press. In later days, the ability of some Zionist leaders to cultivate the gentle art of making enemies turned Storrs from a would-be friend to a sharp critic (*Mandate Memories*, Schocken, 1965).

Aside from the discussion of Storrs, Mr. Katz fails to deliver on his promise to show how the "purveyors of Laurentian pan-Arabism," the "men of the Cairo School," played a role in frustrating Zionism. Mr. Katz says not a word about figures like General G. F. Clayton, David George Hogarth, and Alexander Kirkbride, who, of the Arab Bureau veterans, had the greatest impact on British policy. Philip Graves is passed over, although he was the contact for Aaron Aaronson and the Nili

group (of whom Mr. Katz makes much) and wrote sympathetically of the Zionist cause. Mr. Katz gives only the briefest reference to Sir Wyndham Deedes and Sir Mark Sykes, without mentioning their active support of Zionism.

This is the extent of the direct evidence for Mr. Katz's astonishing thesis. He does quote additional sources, however. For instance, the recently-opened British state archives. Mr. Katz apparently tried to examine several of these files, notably the correspondence between the Palestine Administration and the Colonial Office; the file on the Haganah; the file entitled "Propaganda Among the Arabs"; "Participation of Syrian Arabs" in the 1936 disturbances; "Activities of Fawzi Kaukji" (a Syrian leader of this revolt). All of these files, he reports, were "Destroyed Under Statute." (This rubric, a spokesman for the British Consulate informs me, refers to the mass of routine correspondence thrown away because the Lord Chancellor and outside scholars determine it is not worth saving. Under British procedure, "sensitive" material is withdrawn from the records and not released for one hundred years instead of the customary thirty.) This does not discourage Mr. Katz, however; he makes the circumstantial argument, aided by British Cabinet minutes, that the weak British response to this revolt indicated covert support for it.

With one exception, I will let other people discuss the rest of Mr. Katz's citations: Aldington, Kedourie, Chaim Weizmann's *Trial and Error*, Horace B. Samuel's *Unholy Memories of the Holy Land*, and even an earlier work by Mr. Katz. The exception is Ze'ev Jabotinsky's *Story of the Jewish Legion* (Bernard Ackerman, New York, 1945). After quoting Jabotinsky on the "unprecedented" (Jabotinsky's adjective) wave of anti-Semitism in the British army in Palestine in 1919 and 1920, Mr. Katz refers the reader to Chapter 17 of Jabotinsky's book for "a description of the policy and motives of the military administration" during this period. Jabotinsky is well worth reading. The picture of British anti-Zionism is there, but it lacks some elements crucial to Mr. Katz. Jabotinsky does not deny that the Palestinian Arabs were also hostile to Zionism (that very fact, it would seem, was essential to his political analysis). He portrays "Laurentian pan-Arabism" as

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a sentimental dream, not as a ruthlessly pursued policy. And finally, he draws a clear distinction between the romantic Arab Bureau veterans like Lawrence and the real "*Judenfresser*" of the professional military.

I would gladly withdraw my statement about Mr. Katz's "inordinate hatred of the British," if only someone would give me a more plausible explanation for his method of argumentation. The confused British policy of the aftermath of World War I is explained by analogy to the unprecedented and scarcely imaginable German psychology of World War II (the memory of whose deeds should be neither diminished nor exploited). A grand conspiracy is trotted out to account for a series of blunders and misunderstandings. The style, in sum, is altogether too familiar; it can be found in any number of books that purport to reveal the machinations of the "international Zionist plot." One would hope for better from a man of Mr. Katz's credentials.

Watergate

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Did the Press Uncover Watergate?" [July], Edward Jay Epstein incorrectly identifies Hugh W. Sloan, Jr. as treasurer of the Republican National Committee. This was not the case.

In 1972, the Republican National Committee and the Committee to Re-elect the President were two separate organizations. Mr. Sloan was treasurer of the Committee to Re-elect.

The activities now tagged with the Watergate label were not performed by the Republican National Committee staff, as one might be led to believe by that incorrect identification.

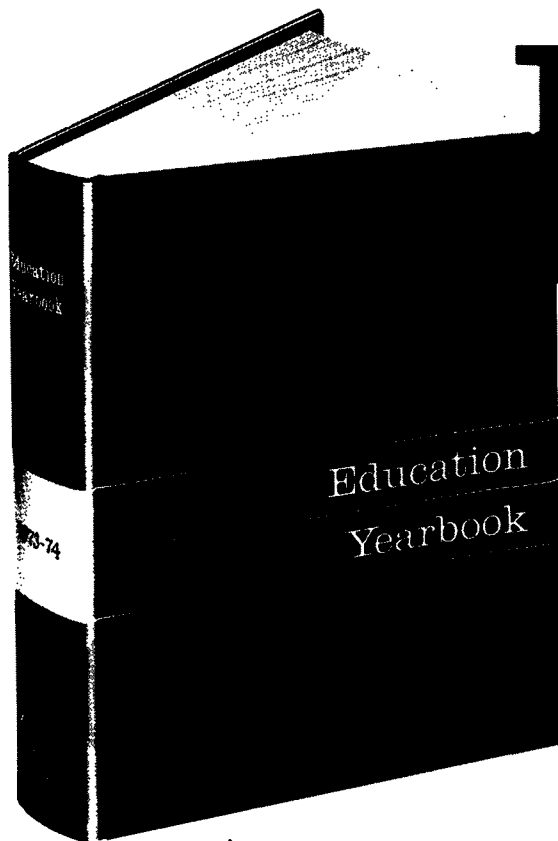
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Science & Authority

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

We are caught up by the myths of our time even as we are refuting them. In R. J. Herrnstein's otherwise perceptive review of Stanley Milgram's *Obedience to Authority* [Books in Review, June] . . . I was caught short by the phrase ". . . but data are to be believed whether or not you like them." Unquestioning obedience to authority has been a danger throughout human civilization whether we are responding to



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the word of God as expressed by Priests, the necessities of the State as expressed by the Leader, or the certainty of Data as expressed by Science.

Data (facts) are not necessarily data (truths). Indeed, data (facts) are not always in fact, facts. Hard scientists, social scientists, journalists, and other researchers of Truth are all subject to human frailties—carelessness, fatigue, dullness, lack of judgment, lack of common-sense, bias, ambition. . . . Most of us, to jump to Mr. Herrnstein's conclusion, deplore ignorance. But ignorance is not only lack of data, it is also bad data and misinterpreted data. . . .

MORTON GLUCK
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . R. J. Herrnstein mildly objects to the several deceptions Milgram practiced in carrying out his experiments. Mr. Herrnstein might more validly have pointed out that deception is the basis for most authority: i.e., all authority is arbitrary, and is gained only when individuals forsake their own judgment to follow another's commands. . . .

Unlike Mr. Herrnstein, I do not believe "too high a value" can be placed on "individual conscience and autonomy," although it would certainly not be wise to depend on most people exercising either. . . . My one big hope—astrangely tempered by pessimism/realism—is that the will-to-anarchy might attain a healthier growth than it exhibits at present.

W. F. ROBERTS
Oneonta, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . The decision of any human being to obey an apparent authority must ultimately depend on the nature of that authority. A moral man will obey what he has reasonable grounds for believing is a moral authority. His decision to disobey will come when he can make a reasonable judgment that the authority is either immoral or incompetent.

Milgram did not prove, decisively or otherwise, "that ordinary people can turn into lethal instruments in the hands of unscrupulous authority." He proved that a cross-section of the New Haven community found it hard to imagine Yale would do evil. *Yale* is the critical word. These people had extensive experience with Yale, and whatever

else Yale was, they had never found it evil. The experts' error in predicting the outcome probably came from their failure to appreciate that people make assumptions about Yale professors different from their assumptions about some politicians.

When I was a medical student, I obeyed orders and caused people to scream in pain or gave them drugs with poisonous side effects. I obeyed because I had a reasonable supposition of the morality of my superiors. I must confess that some of my patients died.

Milgram discovered an old fact—that ordinary people can turn into lethal instruments in the hands of absolutely *scrupulous* authority. It goes under the saying, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." Thankfully, Yale and my medical professors have been more right than wrong. The people of New Haven and I judged our authority structures correctly. It is possible for moral men to make a reasonable mistake about the morality of an authority. . . .

The dilemma is not between obedience and disobedience. The hard part is simply to know which authorities can be trusted. I don't see what Milgram contributed to that eternal question.

(DR.) MICHAEL P. REMLER
School of Medicine
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

R. J. Herrnstein tells us that only a little deception was practiced and that in the name of science. What he neglects to note is that if the "subjects" (read "people") acted like Eichmanns, then Milgram was the Hitler of the experiment. The thought of a social scientist playing Hitler in the name of advancing human knowledge is just about as grotesque as anything I can imagine.

In the real world, as distinct from the artificial and speculative world of the laboratory, no harm was done to the victims. They were not in fact shocked. But a good deal of harm was done to the subjects; they were put through a horrifying and traumatic experience so that a professor might write a professional book which proves that under some circumstances people are obedient when they should not be. Big deal. If there were any victims at all, they were the "subjects," and if there is any criminal at all, it is Milgram

who dares to pontificate about those whom he victimized.

If I took seriously such evil research I suppose I would be astonished that a third of the "subjects" were able to resist the massive and supposedly beneficial authority that is given to university scientists in our society. But I see no reason to believe that there is any transferability from a university laboratory to the real world. All Milgram has proved is that many people will do what university scientists, working in the name of Science, will tell them to do in a laboratory. Again, big deal. . . .

ANDREW M. GREELEY
Center for the Study of Pluralism
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

R. J. HERRNSTEIN writes:

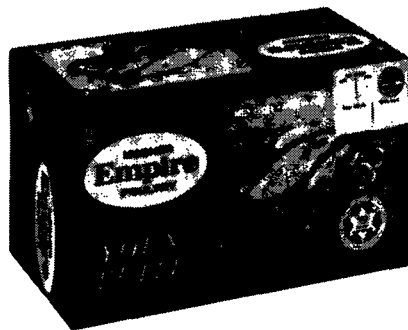
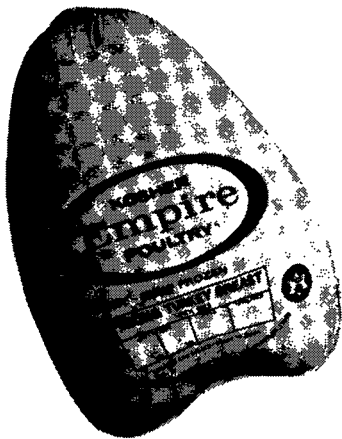
Need I say that I share Morton Gluck's concern that the data of science be properly gathered and judiciously interpreted? I perhaps should have said in my review that unsound data, or data wrongly represented, are not data at all. In that sense, Milgram presents data that command belief.

W. F. Roberts is uncomfortably caught on one horn of the dilemma of authority versus autonomy. He says, "I do not believe 'too high a value' can be placed on 'individual conscience and autonomy,' although it would certainly not be wise to depend on most people exercising either" (emphasis added). So what do we do with people who exercise autonomy unwisely or worse? If the risk is great enough, we usually rely on a proper social authority to serve the individual's, and public's, interest—a doctor or a policeman, for example. The answer is, I know, full of holes, but a leaky boat is better than no boat at all on a long and occasionally stormy voyage.

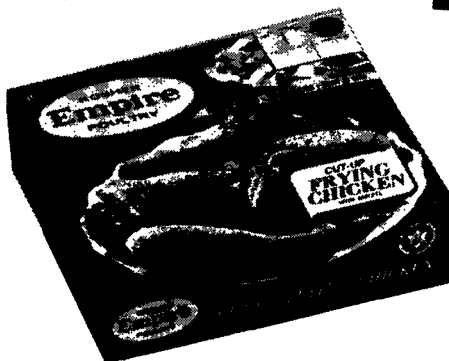
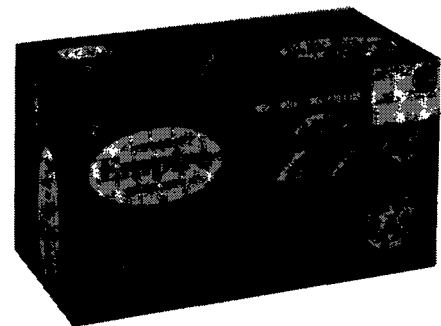
Michael P. Remler's hypothesis is that subjects obeyed in Milgram's experiments only because of the implicit authority of Yale. But Milgram examined that hypothesis by testing some subjects with the pseudo-experiment detached from Yale, or from any other known institution in New Haven, and reported the results in the book. He found that many subjects still obeyed the pseudo-experimenter. We can conclude, first, that a social authority is sometimes more diffuse than any particular institution, hence harder to localize. An authoritative fig-

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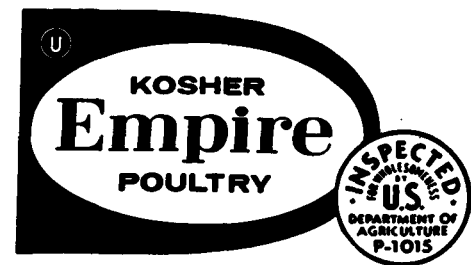
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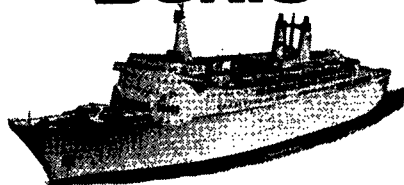
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ure in a laboratory coat seems to share power with all the doctors, scientists, foremen, and so forth, whose authority we have ever accepted in actual or vicarious experience. Second, we can further appreciate that Milgram's data are non-trivial, for Mr. Remler's guess seemed plausible. When you can do an experiment, there is no harm or shame in guessing wrong. Mr. Remler should read Milgram's book, for it reports data bearing on another dozen or so plausible guesses about the structure and character of authority.

Andrew M. Greeley seems to think he knows it all, but his letter proves he does not, for he also assumes that the Yale setting was necessary. If Rev. Greeley had been asked to predict the outcomes of the experiment's various procedures, he would probably have done about as well as people actually did, which is to say very poorly. The experiment, then, can enlighten Rev. Greeley as it has enlightened the rest of us. Why then does he resort to vilification, calling Milgram, in one short letter, a "Hitler" and a "criminal," and his research "evil"? The reaction is disturbing and inappropriate, though common. If one assumes that empirical psychology can tell us nothing important that we do not already know, then it is easy to damn and mock it. Rev. Greeley might be more helpful if he exercised his moral faculty without making things so easy for himself.

Emancipation

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jacob Katz's essay, "Emancipation and Jewish Studies" [April], repeatedly associates the process of emancipation with the legal status of the Jewish people. Whether it is the recognition of "the right of Jewish residency" or "the granting of political and social equality," Jewish emancipation is associated with a legal recognition by a government of its Jewish constituency.

In actual fact, emancipation gained ground more by precedents set by life than by legal enactments. Very often Jews enjoyed most rights of citizenship in 18th-century Western Europe and in the British crown colonies without their being promulgated in specific laws. . . . Far more important than the corrective legislation that was passed in 1857 was the right granted to English Jews to be eligible for such offices as Privy

Councillor, Secretary of State, Keeper of the Seal, and even Prime Minister (if there had been no concomitant obligation for the Prime-Minister-elect to hold a seat in Parliament), all the while that the Parliamentary disability of English Jewry was being discussed.

Only at the end of his essay does Mr. Katz diverge from the path of stressing the legal precedents associated with Jewish emancipation. In its stead there is a stress on the social acceptance that underlies the legal precedent. Indeed, while the number of departments of Jewish studies that have recently been established in American universities is impressive, the public opinion that has brought this phenomenon into being may be even more important. If the reasons cloister around the need "to accommodate the sensibilities of the local Jewish communities" and not to delve more deeply into the science of Judaism, then the rejoicing over the growth of Jewish-studies departments needs to be subdued. This latter approach of Mr. Katz could have been applied to his accounting of the early history of emancipation. Such an approach would have yielded a more accurate depiction of the development of Jewish emancipation. . . .

(RABBI) HERBERT A. YOSKOWITZ

Beth El Congregation
Baltimore, Maryland

JACOB KATZ writes:

Herbert A. Yoskowitz takes my article as an opportunity to enlarge upon the many-sided problems of Jewish emancipation, while I limited myself to a very specific point. I wished to re-examine the thesis of Zunz that formal, political emancipation would not guarantee equality unless it was followed up by the acceptance of Judaism as a worthwhile subject of study in the academic world, and I found this thesis confirmed in the light of the historical experience of a century and a half. Thus my article deals with what happened after formal emancipation had been achieved, and I took no stand on the controversial issue of where, when, and through what causes emancipation had been brought about or what the relative importance of the factors involved had been. These are difficult subjects on which I have expressed my view elsewhere, admittedly with less confidence in my ability to dogmatize about them than Rabbi Yoskowitz shows.

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Why Ethnicity?

Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan

ETHNICITY seems to be a new term. In the sense in which we use it—the character or quality of an ethnic group—it does not appear in the 1933 edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and only makes its appearance in the 1972 *Supplement*, where the first usage recorded is that of David Riesman in 1953. It is included in *Webster's Third New International*, 1961, but did not find its way into the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* of 1966, nor the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 1969. It did, however, make the 1973 edition of the *American Heritage Dictionary*, where it is defined as: "1. The condition of belonging to a particular ethnic group; 2. Ethnic pride." One senses a term still on the move. The first of these two definitions fits well with our own: an objective condition. The second, however, is decidedly *subjective*: "pride." How very different from an old meaning, "obs. rare" as the *OED* has it, "heathendom: heathen superstition." At the very least, a change of relative status is going on here, and a shift in the general understanding of ethnic groups. Where they were formerly seen as survivals from an earlier age, to be treated variously with toleration, annoyance, or mild celebration, there is now a growing sense that they may be forms of social life that are capable of renewing and transforming themselves.

Still, one may wonder how useful this new term really is. Does it describe a new reality, or is it simply a new way of describing something old? Is it not a matter of age-old human characteristics and sentiments, finding expression, perhaps, in new settings, but in themselves nothing new? We think not. In our judgment, something new *has* appeared. A reader of the early 19th century, encountering the assertion that industrialization was

shaping distinctive social classes, could well have shrugged it off with the thought that there had always been social ranks, always different ways of earning a living. Yet to have done so would have been to miss a big event of that age. Similarly, we feel that to see only what is familiar in the ethnicity of our time is to miss the emergence of a new social category as significant for the understanding of the present-day world as that of social class itself.

Perhaps the best way of getting at what is new here is by reference to the prevailing ideas of most contemporary social scientists regarding the course of modern social development. One such idea has been called by Milton Gordon the "liberal expectancy"—the expectation that the kinds of features which distinguish one group from another would inevitably lose their weight and sharpness in modern and modernizing societies, that there would be increasing emphasis on achievement rather than ascription, that common systems of education and communication would wipe out group differences, that nationally uniform economic and political systems would have the same effect. Under these circumstances the "primordial" (or in any case antecedent) differences between groups would become less and less significant. This "liberal expectancy" flowed into the "radical expectancy"—that class would become the main line of division between people, erasing the earlier lines of tribe, language, religion, national origin, and that these class divisions would themselves, after the Revolution, disappear. Thus Karl Marx and his followers reacted with impatience to the heritage of the past, as they saw it, in the form of ethnic attachments. *Interest* should guide rational men in social action; and interest was determined by economic position.

Yet one of the striking characteristics of the present situation is the extent to which the ethnic group itself is now behaving as an interest group. Interest is pursued effectively by ethnic groups today as well as by interest-defined groups: indeed, perhaps it can be pursued even more effectively. As against class-based forms of social identification and conflict—which of course continue to exist—we have been surprised by the persistence and salience of ethnic-based forms of social identification and conflict.

NATHAN GLAZER and DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN collaborated on the pioneering study of ethnicity, *Beyond the Melting Pot* (1963), several parts of which originally appeared in COMMENTARY. Mr. Glazer is professor of education and social structure at Harvard; his most recent book is *Remembering the Answers*. Daniel P. Moynihan, on leave from the government department at Harvard, is currently serving as Ambassador of the United States to India; his most recent book is *Coping*. A somewhat different version of the present article will form the introduction to a volume on ethnicity that they have edited for the American Academy of Arts and Sciences which will be published next spring by Harvard University Press.

Thus, whereas in the past religious conflicts were based on such issues as the free and public practice of a religion, today they are based—like the one which is tearing Northern Ireland apart—on the issue of which group shall gain benefits or hold power. Language conflicts—as in India—today have little to do with the right to the public use of the language, as they did in the 19th century when, for example, there were efforts to Russify the Russian Empire and Magyarize the Hungarian Kingdom. They have more to do with which linguistic group shall have the best opportunity to get which job. It would be wrong to insist on too sharp a distinction: certainly the prestige of one's religion and language is involved in both kinds of conflict. Nevertheless the weight has shifted from an emphasis on culture, language, religion, *as such*, to an emphasis on the economic and social interests of the members of the linguistic or religious group.

There are two related explanations which may account for this development. The first is the evolution of the welfare state in the more advanced economies of the world and the advent of the socialist state in the underdeveloped economies. In either circumstance, the *state* becomes a crucial and direct influence on economic well-being, as well as on political status and everything flowing from that. In such a situation it is usually not enough, or not enough for long enough, to assert claims on behalf of large but loosely aggregated groups such as "workers," "peasants," "white-collar employees." Claims of this order are too broad to elicit a very satisfactory response, and even when they do, the benefits are necessarily diffuse and often evanescent, having the quality of an across-the-board wage increase which produces an inflation that leaves everyone about as he was. As a matter of strategic efficacy, it becomes necessary to disaggregate, to assert claims for a group small enough to make significant concessions possible and, equally, small enough to produce some gain from the concessions made. A British Prime Minister who does "something for the workers" probably doesn't do much and almost certainly does even less for his party. Doing something for the Scots, however, becomes an increasingly attractive and real option for Westminster. *That* much in the way of resources can be found, and the Scots are likely both to know about it and to consider it a positive gain, at least past the point of the next general election.

THE welfare state and the socialist state appear to be especially responsive to ethnic claims. This is everywhere to be encountered: an Indian minister assuring his parliament that "Muslims, Christians, and other minorities" will receive their "due and proper share" of railroad jobs; a Czech government choosing a Slovak leader; a Chinese prime minister in Singapore choosing an Indian foreign minister; and so on.

Leaders of groups are aware that political skills in pressing such claims vary, and occasionally voice their concern, as reported in a recent Associated Press dispatch from Los Angeles:

The Asian-American community leaders have accused the U.S. Department of Labor of exploiting their inexperience in "the political game" to exclude them when allocating federal funds.

"We Asians have always been a quiet minority. We've always been taken for granted, and we always get the crumbs," Miss —, a leader of the Chinese Community Council, told newsmen.

Miss — was referring to the distribution of \$314,000 in federal funds for career counseling projects. The council leaders accused the U.S. manpower area planning council of doing "a tremendous wrong" in giving the funds away entirely to Black and Chicano groups, whose project proposals were more professionally drafted.

The strategic efficacy of ethnicity as a basis for asserting claims against government has its counterpart in the seeming ease whereby government employs ethnic categories as a basis for distributing its rewards. Nothing was more dramatic than the rise of this practice on the part of the American government in the 1960's, *at the very moment it was being declared abhorrent and illegal*. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the very embodiment of "the liberal expectancy." "Race, color, religion, sex, national origin": all such ascriptive categories were abolished. No one was to be classified by such primitive terms. In particular, government was to become color blind. Within hours of the enactment of the statute, in order to enforce it, the federal government, for the first time, began to require ever more detailed accountings of subgroups of every description, job trainees, kindergarten children, kindergarten teachers, university faculties, front-office secretaries in terms of—race, color, sex. (We have not yet proceeded to religion and national origin.) The expectancy that such characteristics would be ignored—in the immediate postwar years governments were busy eliminating all references to race and religion from official forms, even forbidding universities to request photographs of applicants for admission—was instantly replaced by the requirement that they not only be known but the facts as to distribution justified. Random distributions would not do: quotas appeared in American society, the instrument of national social policy designed ostensibly to prevent discrimination by going—inevitably, perhaps—beyond that to positive efforts on behalf of those presumptively discriminated against, a list which in short order commenced to lengthen.

Statutes began to reflect this new strategy. A small example: the Drug Abuse Education Act of 1970 provides "for the use of adequate personnel from similar social, cultural, age, ethnic, and

racial backgrounds as those of the individuals served under any such program." In other words, the federal government was not only to know the peculiar ethnic patterns of various kinds of drug abuse, but was to match the therapists with the patients: Azerbaijani junkie, Azerbaijani counselor. In a variation of folk medicine, it was judged that wherever a malady was found, there too would a remedy reside. Which may or may not be nonsense: what is not to be denied is that the statute appropriated many millions of dollars for social services which were going to end up in the pockets of those who would dispense them, and these could be concentrated in specific ethnic groups. If government was doing a group a favor by providing special therapeutic services, it could compound the favor by concentrating the patronage involved within the very same group.

IN ADDITION to the strategic efficacy of ethnicity in making claims on the resources of the modern state, another reason for the shift to ethnicity as the organizing principle of interest conflicts concerns the issue of equality. Men are not equal; neither are ethnic groups. Whether they should be, or shouldn't be, is, of course, a wholly different question. If one is to describe the way the world is, one describes people everywhere ranked in systems of social stratification in which one person is better or worse off than another. This is the empirical fact. As with individuals, so with groups of individuals, with social groups defined by ethnic identity. We follow Ralf Dahrendorf in holding that inequalities among groups arise in the same way as he says they do among individuals: from differential success in achieving norms. Dahrendorf's thesis is that every society establishes norms selected from a universe of possible values. There seems no end to human ingenuity in thinking of characteristics that can be described as desirable or undesirable. It can be thought a good thing to be wealthy, or to be poor; to be dark or to be light; to be skinny or fat; generous or mean; religious or atheistic; fun-loving or dour; promiscuous or chaste. However, once a selection is made as to what is good and what is bad, individuals—and, we add, ethnic groups—have different levels of success in attaining the desired condition. Woe to blacks in Rhodesia; pity the white in Uganda. Pity the Nepalese in Bhutan who labors on construction gangs before the eyes of a landowning peasantry which despises such servility; woe to the Malay facing the onslaught of Chinese industriousness.

In Dahrendorf's account the individual encounters the norms of his society *and* the "sanctions designed to enforce these principles." Some do better than others and reap the rewards; some suffer the punishments. But as between different ethnic groups, which have made quite different selections from the universe of possibilities, the norms of one are likely to be quite different from

those of another, such that individuals who are successful by the standards of their own groups will be failures by those of the others. In a situation where one group is dominant—which is to say that its norms are seen as normal not just for them, but for everyone—there follows an almost automatic consignment of other groups to inferior status. This is not an entirely automatic consequence, since some groups will discover that they are good at achieving the norms of the dominant group, and may even be better than the group that laid down those "laws." In Kenya the Indians were evidently better at trading than the Africans, and so the Indians are being expelled. Jews have known the experience, Japanese, Chinese: who has not? (There are, of course, situations in which no one group is dominant, and where differing norms compete with one another, but this makes if anything for less social peace, as no one is ever quite certain what constitutes success or failure.)

Herein lies the dynamic element in the system. Dahrendorf writes that "Inequality always implies the gain of one group at the expense of others; thus every system of social stratification generates protest against its principles and bears the seeds of its own suppression." It is not perhaps necessary to assert that *every* system of social stratification generates protest against its principles. Some may not. But most that we run into in the 20th century seem to do so. This is to say that a *different* set of norms is set forth as desirable. Struggle ensues. Changes occur, not infrequently changes that favor those previously unsuccessful. Things *they* are good at come to be labeled good.

At this point we come back to the strategic efficacy of ethnicity as an organizing principle. In the most natural way the unsuccessful group has the best chance of changing the system if it behaves *as a group*. It is as a group that its struggle becomes not merely negative, but positive also, not merely against the norms of some other group, but in favor of the already existing norms of its own. One of the difficulties of social class as an organizing principle surely is that there just isn't that much conflict of norm between most social classes. In the West intellectuals and others at the top of the social stratification will fantasize about the differences between the values of those at the bottom and those in the middle—always to the advantage of the former—but it usually turns out that those at the bottom pretty much share notions of desirable and undesirable with those in the middle. Ethnic groups, however, often do differ as to what is desirable and what is undesirable.

Marxists thought ethnic groups would disappear. Why on earth would one wish to be a Pole when one could be a Worker? One reason, we are suggesting, is that being a Pole—or a Sikh, or a Mestizo—frequently involves a distinctive advantage or disadvantage, and that remaining a Pole, or a Sikh, or a Mestizo is just as frequently a high-

ly effective way either to defend the advantage or to overcome the disadvantage.

Some individuals opt otherwise. They "pass" out of their own ethnic group into another, typically one that offers greater advantages. This process of absorption is extremely powerful: in the United States, at least, it is probably still quite the most important social process. Americans become more "American" and less ethnic all the time. But they may also—and simultaneously—become more ethnic. This was most dramatically the experience of Negro Americans during the 1960's—they even changed their name to "blacks" to establish that new assertion of distinctiveness—and other groups followed suit, or accompanied them on parallel tracks. As with student activism, this was a phenomenon whole parts of the world were experiencing, and any explanation that depends solely on local elements is not likely to remain satisfactory for long. Something larger was going on: something so large that Ralf Dahrendorf has recently referred to the "refeudalization" of society, the return of ascribed rather than achieved characteristics as determinants of social stratification. It may be that ethnicity is merely part of this larger development.

IN A most tentative way one further suggestion may be advanced concerning the new saliency of ethnicity. Dahrendorf notes that for almost two centuries—"from Locke to Lenin"—"property dominated social and political thought: as a source of everything good or evil, as a principle to be retained or abolished." Yet, he continues, in societies such as those of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Israel, where private property has been reduced to "virtual insignificance," social stratification—class—persists, even flourishes. Further, we would add, the new stratification is to a considerable extent correlated with ethnicity. It probably always was, but the preoccupation with property relations obscured ethnic ones, which, typically, were seen either as derivative of the former, or survivals from a pre-contractual age. Now—as Yugoslav Communists struggle hopelessly (or so it would seem) to achieve some equity of development and living standard as between Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia; as Israeli socialists look with alarm at the persisting differences in the "social class status" of "European" Jews as against "Oriental" Jews in their homeland; as Great Russians prattle on about the equality of ethnic groups in the Soviet Union, while Ukrainians in Washington rally in protest at the *Russian* Embassy, and Jews in Moscow demand to be allowed to emigrate to Israel—it is property that begins to seem derivative, and ethnicity a more fundamental source of stratification.

This phenomenon is likely to be as much in evidence in an advanced capitalistic society where property relations are attenuated, as in a Com-

munist or socialist society where they are abolished. But it is the Communist nations which have shown the more pronounced concern with ethnic matters, possibly because ethnic reality is so at odds with Marxist-Leninist theory. (Otto Bauer, one of the few Communist theorists to attempt to incorporate "nationalities" into Communist theory was, perhaps significantly, a product of the Austro-Hungarian world at a time when Croatia was governed from Vienna.) There are scores of official nationalities in the Soviet Union, and every citizen, at age sixteen, must opt for one such identity, which he retains for life. Similarly, the Chinese, with their great, central Han culture, find themselves paying considerable heed to "minority nationalities." According to a recent news dispatch from Peking:

More than 143,000 people of minority nationalities in the autonomous regions of Sinkiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia, Kwangsi and Ningsia, and the Province of Yunnan have been admitted into the Communist Party of China since the Ninth Party Congress in 1969. They include Tibetans, Mongolians, Uighurs, Chuangs, Huis, Koreans, Kazakhs, Yaos, and Miaos.

Most of the new party members are workers and former poor and lower-middle peasants or herdsmen. There is a certain number of revolutionary intellectuals. The new members are both men and women and range in age from young to old.

Many of the new party members from national minorities are emancipated slaves or serfs, or children of former slaves or serfs. They warmly love Chairman Mao, the Party, and the New Society, and hate the old society.*

* Compare the following item taken from a recent issue of *GOP Nationalities News*, a publication of the Republican National Committee:

"*Martin E. Seneca, Jr.*, a Seneca Indian, has been appointed to the important position of Director of Trust Responsibilities, Bureau of Indian Affairs, by BIA Commissioner Morris Thompson. Seneca, with a doctorate of law degree from Harvard, is an Associate Professor of Law at the University of Utah. . . .

"At the April 21 meeting in New York of the newly-formed *Albanian-American Republican Club*, the following slate of officers was elected: *Hamdi H. Oruci*, Chairman; *Mrs. Nejmie Zaimi* and *Dr. Ligoz Buzi*, Vice Chairmen; *Lumo M. Tsungu*, Secretary; and *Mick Kajtazi*, Treasurer.

"Present at the 11th Annual Hungarian Ball of the *Hungarian Freedom Fighters Federation of the U.S.* held in Washington, D.C., on April 20, were Republican Congressman *Larry Hogan* of Maryland; the Director of the RNC Heritage Division and *Mrs. Julian Niemczyk*; and *Mr. and Mrs. Laszlo Pasztor* and *Dr. and Mrs. John B. Genys*, Chairman and Treasurer respectively of the NRHG(N) Council.

"*Mrs. Angela Miller*, of Colombian origin, who is vice president of the *Latin American Nationalities Council*, 3rd vice chairman of the *Republican Business Women* of New York, and president of *All Nations Women's Club, Inc.*, was elected co-chairman of Activities and Planning Committee of the NRHG(N) Council.

Mrs. Inese Stokes, of Latvian heritage, recording secretary of the *Illinois Republican State Nationalities Council*, was elected co-chairman of the NRHG(N) Awards Committee."

In short, while religion, language, and concrete cultural differences did decline, at least in the West, as specific foci of attachment and concern (to the extent the "liberal expectancy" was fulfilled), the groups defined by these cultural characteristics were differentially distributed through the social structure. Hence, even as their cultural characteristics were modified by modern social trends and became increasingly "symbolic," they were nevertheless able to serve as a basis for mobilization. Class was once expected to become the focus in the modern world for mobilizing group interests—it related directly to the rational character of society, and the way society generated different interests. Nation was the other great pole around which group interests could be mobilized. We do not in any way suggest that these are not the central categories for understanding modern societies; what we do propose is that ethnicity must now be added as a new major focus for the mobilization of interests, troublesome both to those who wish to emphasize the primacy of class, and those who wish to emphasize the primacy of nation.

But in order to understand why ethnicity has become stronger as a basis of group mobilization, it is necessary to modify the bald assertion that ethnicity serves as a means of advancing group interests—which it does—by insisting that it is not *only* a means of advancing interests. Indeed, one reason that ethnicity has become so effective a means of advancing interests is that it involves more than interests. As Daniel Bell puts it: "Ethnicity has become more salient [than class] because it can combine an interest with an affective tie," while, on the other hand, in the case of class, "what had once been an *ideology* has now become almost exclusively an *interest*."

ILLUMINATING as they are, however, such observations do not answer the questions: Why ethnicity? and Why now? Harold Isaacs, describing the making of a basic group identity, begins his analysis with something so immediate as body image. Clearly that, as well as language and intimately transmitted culture, all play a role in the affective component of ethnicity. But in a world of rapid change and shifting identity, any fixed notion of the "primordial" as the basis of group formation is bound to run into trouble. One problem with the primordial is that nowadays we know how recently many "primordial" groups were created. It is also clear that circumstances have much to do with degrees of ethnic attachment, mobilization, and conflict. In some circumstances, there is much; in others, very little.

These are two poles of analysis—the "primordialist" and the "circumstantialist"—between which explanations for the persistence or revival or creation of ethnic identities tend to waver—ours included. We do not celebrate ethnicity as a basic attribute of men which, when suppressed,

will always rise again; nor do we dismiss it as an aberration on the road to a rational society in which all such heritages of the past will become irrelevant to social and political action. For as a political idea, as a mobilizing principle, ethnicity in our time has manifested itself under widely disparate conditions with luxuriantly varied results.

Thus, in the United States the rising demands among blacks first for civil rights, then for equality of opportunity, finally for some equality of participation in the social, economic, and political institutions of the country, can be understood in terms of the distinctive history of blacks in the United States. But it is striking that the black movement found an echo among other ethnic groups in the United States—Latin American, American Indian, Oriental, and eventually whites of various kinds. The circumstances of each of these groups were different. Some had been conquered, some had emigrated from colonies, some from free countries, some had met substantial prejudice and discrimination, others nothing much more than the inconvenience of a new country. Yet the form of the mobilized ethnic group seemed, in some degree, to satisfy individuals in each. (Indeed, many had been involved in vigorous ethnic politics for half a century or more. What changed was that such activity was legitimated: previously it had been disapproved and to some degree disavowed.) We do not assert that some common need, some common distress, existed in everybody ready to be evoked. We do not say that ethnicity is something like the identity of parents in Victorian novels which must be discovered lest some nameless distress follow. But on the other hand we do not believe that the new intensity of ethnic identification among a number of groups was merely a matter of imitation, or even of protective mimicry. Some combination of need and imitation seems to have been at work.

The black revolution had as surprising a resonance abroad as at home. A "black power" movement developed in the West Indies, a "civil rights" movement in Northern Ireland, and "Black Panthers" formed in Israel. Once again, as we consider the relative weight of primordial and circumstantial factors, we find a complex interplay. The Catholics of Northern Ireland did not need the black example to teach them that they were aggrieved—their miseries go back farther in history than those of American blacks—nor did the Oriental Jews of Israel need the American blacks to remind them that something was amiss with their position. Nevertheless through the ever more universally pervasive mass media, the black example exerted its influence to some indeterminate extent, just as on their side American blacks were influenced by certain developments abroad.

The American civil-rights movement, for example, avowedly and explicitly adopted techniques developed in 20th-century India during the

struggle against British rule. The more recent (and, it is hoped, marginal) incidents of urban terrorism followed, albeit without any evident awareness of the fact, a model of resistance developed by the Irish in the 19th century, and still dominant there. Underground "commandants" in San Francisco issuing "execution" orders against deviant revolutionaries were acting out the drama of Dublin in 1920. North Africans picked up the technique, or else invented it on their own; and an Italian made a movie, *The Battle of Algiers*, which American revolutionaries were soon trying to imitate. And so exchanges proceeded, with, in our time, ever mounting violence. Hijacking was invented, we believe, by the Palestinians—but Croatian workers resident in Sweden and Moslem dissidents in Ethiopia (to refer only to some of those who have acted out of some ethnic interest) have both made use of it.

WHAT of the future? In the 18th and 19th centuries, international economic developments led to great migrations of labor, which in turn led to the creation of a good number of multi-ethnic states. This process is still going on. Never in history did Western Europe import as much labor as in the years after the Second World War. A new colored population of West Indians, Indians, and Pakistanis was added to England. One-third of the labor force of Switzerland, one-eighth of the labor force of Germany, and substantial parts of the labor forces of France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Sweden came to be made up of foreign workers. The legal circumstances of each of these waves of new immigrants varied. Some, like the new colored groups of England, were permanent, and had all the rights of citizenship. Some were from neighboring members of the European Commonwealth, and had claims to full social benefits in any other state of the Commonwealth. Some—like the Algerians in France—came from former colonies and had special rights. Others—Turks and Yugoslavs in Germany—came under permits and, theoretically at least, had no right to any permanent settlement. In other cases, such as Sweden, an egalitarian philosophy of government treated all newcomers, whether Italian or Finnish, generously, both as to social benefits and political rights.

Varied though the patterns are, however, we see everywhere two different approaches in conflict. On the one hand, the common philosophy of egalitarianism asserts that *all* should be treated alike: not only natives and older citizens of a nation, but those who come to work and settle there. On the other hand, Western Europeans have learned that new and permanent settlements of other ethnic groups mean ethnic conflict, and they intend to avoid it if they can. For Great Britain it is too late: although only 2 per cent of the population, the new colored groups already form an issue in British politics that far outweighs their

minuscule numbers, and further immigration has virtually been halted. The North Africans, Spanish, and Portuguese in France, and the Italians, Yugoslavs, and Turks in Germany have lesser rights than the West Indians, Pakistanis, and Indians in England, but one wonders whether they will actually be any less permanent a part of those countries. Will the problems arising from the new heterogeneity of France and Germany—the familiar conflicts over housing, schooling, jobs—really be settled by simple mass expulsions, legal as that may be?

Alone of the major nations in the world, the United States continues to accept large numbers of permanent immigrants. Moreover, these immigrants are of quite different "stock" from those of the past. Most notably, they are Asian, and most notable of all, they are to an unprecedented degree professional, upper-middle-class persons. What this means is that the process of gaining political influence—a process which took even the most successful of earlier groups two generations at least—is likely to be rapid for these most recent newcomers. Thus, however much Western Europeans and others may succeed in protecting themselves from the ethnic storms of the 20th century, we may be sure they will continue to buffet the Great Republic.

Nor, of course, can the remaining nation-states easily succeed in avoiding their share of such difficulties. Since the Second World War almost every new nation—and they far outnumber the older nations—has come into existence with a number of serious ethnic conflicts waiting, as it were, their turn to be the focus of post-independence political life. The old European states, while becoming somewhat more diverse with the addition of new groups, are still in the process of finding out just how diverse they had already become. Add to this the fact—still given surprisingly little attention—that in a world in which each society becomes ethnically more diverse, we have had, since the Second World War, a strong prejudice against the formation of new states organized along ethnic lines. As Samuel Huntington has written, "The 20th-century bias against political divorce, that is, secession, is just about as strong as the 19th-century bias against marital divorce." Bangladesh is an exception, but the general rule remains in force. Certainly these political realities alone seem to provide a good number of the ingredients for a greater degree of ethnic conflict than was experienced, for example, in the world of the Great Depression.

Indeed, there is already evident an increase both in the number and intensity of ethnic conflicts. Walker Conner has undertaken the invaluable task of recording the rise and extent since the French Revolution of what he calls "ethnonationalism." He reports that nearly half of the independent countries of the world have been troubled in recent years by some degree of "eth-

nically inspired dissonance." We do not have benchmarks for earlier periods, but it seems clear that ethnic conflicts have shown a rise, too, in intensity in the last decade or so. As some examples, consider the Anglophone-Francophone conflict in Canada, Catholic and Protestant in Northern Ireland, Walloon and Fleming in Belgium, Jews and other minority groups versus great Russians in the Soviet Union, Ibo versus Hausa and Yoruba in Nigeria, Bengali versus non-Bengali in Pakistan, Chinese versus Malay in Malaysia, Greek versus Turk in Cyprus. If we had measurements of intensity we would not necessarily find that every one of these conflicts has become uniformly more intense. Some of them seem happily to have peaked (sometimes in war and violent conflict), and measures of harmonization and accommodation seem to have had some effect since these peaks were reached (Nigeria, the United States). In at least one other case—Pakistan—conflict has reached the point of separation, and has subsequently declined in intensity, to be succeeded perhaps by a rise in ethnic

discord within each one of the two successor states.

There are those who say that ethnic conflict is simply the form that class conflict has been taking on certain occasions in recent decades, and that without the motor of class exploitation nothing else would follow. Others say that ethnic conflicts must be decomposed into a variety of elements: colonial conflicts; the uprising of the "internally" colonized; the ambition of self-appointed leaders; fashions and fads. To us, however, it seems clear that ethnic identity *has* become more salient, ethnic self-assertion stronger, ethnic conflict more marked everywhere in the last twenty years, and that the reasons include the rise of the welfare state, the clash between egalitarianism and the differential achievement of norms, the growing heterogeneity of states, and the international system of communication. This set of reasons scarcely amounts to a theory, but it does, we believe, suggest that there is a phenomenon here that is, in ways not yet explicated, no mere survival but intimately and organically bound up with major trends of modern societies.

Guerrillas & Terrorists

Walter Laqueur

GUERRILLA warfare is as old as war itself: according to the Anastasi Papyrus, the Hittite King Mursilis complained, "The irregulars did not dare to attack me in the daylight and preferred to fall on me by night." But the term guerrilla is much younger, having first been used in 1809 with reference to "irregular war carried on by small bodies of men acting independently." This definition, however broad, is no longer satisfactory, and historians and sociologists have looked, mostly in vain, for looser terms such as civil violence or internal war. The latter was defined by Harry Eckstein in 1964 as covering "guerrilla wars, localized rioting, widely dispersed turmoil, organized and apparently unorganized terrorism, mutinies, and coups d'état." But whatever the difficulties in finding an overall definition, let alone an explanation for the phenomenon, no one doubts that there has been of late, much against expectation, a marked upsurge of armed violence in many parts of the globe. As of this moment, guerrilla warfare of one sort or another continues sporadically in at least thirty countries from Ulster to Iraq, and from the Philippines to Argentina, and there is no end in sight. Nuclear war seems unlikely in the near future and major conventional wars have become rare, but the future of guerrilla warfare appears to be assured despite the predictions of some early 20th-century military theorists who assumed that with technical progress this form of conflict would soon go out of fashion.

Although whole libraries have been written on guerrilla warfare since it was rediscovered in the Second World War, the literature is of little help in the search for a new definition. For most of these books are of a strictly utilitarian character. On the one hand, there are tracts by Mao, Che Guevara, Debray, Marighela and others on fighting successful guerrilla campaigns; on the other hand, there are the writings of the theorists of counter-insurgency showing how to suppress internal warfare most efficiently and expeditiously. Except for the inevitable ideological admixture, these works frequently remind one of cookbooks;

one of them in fact is called *The Anarchist Cookbook*, though it has little to do with wining and dining.

What then is guerrilla warfare? It has a hundred different faces, but usually it is a war without fronts, the struggle of the weak against the strong, a war designed to harass the enemy, to cut off his communications with the aim of making life as uncomfortable as possible for him. But the lines dividing guerrilla warfare from regular warfare are not always sharp. On many occasions regular armies have used guerrilla tactics—small, highly mobile regular units have operated in the enemy's rear, and guerrilla units such as Busby's rangers in the American Civil War or T. E. Lawrence's Bedouins in World War I have been employed within the framework of conventional war. Nor has the dividing line between guerrilla war and brigandage always been clear-cut, as students of Spanish, Italian, or Balkan history will testify. The fighters for national liberation against the Turkish yoke in the Balkans were called Haiduks (*Klephtos* in Greek), but the term also meant robber, and for good reason. The leaders of the Confederate rangers in the American Civil War were men of integrity, but the same can certainly not be said about many of their subordinates. Francis Marion (the "Swamp Fox") faced a similar problem during the American Revolution: some of his men were simply fighting for plunder and would change sides from time to time.

Politically, it is a mistake to assume that guerrilla war is always "left-wing" or revolutionary. The major guerrilla movements at the beginning of the 19th century—the Spanish *guerrilleros*, the Chouans in Western France, Denis Davidov's Cossacks, Andreas Hofer's Tyrolean peasants—were definitely "right-wing": they were all intensely royalist, patriotic, and religious in inspiration. Later, the Macedonian IMRO, which played an important role in Balkan politics between the two world wars, was in contact both with fascist Italy and the Comintern. The Palestinian Arab guerrillas in 1936-39 were supported by Italy, whereas Yasir Arafat has made more pilgrimages to Moscow than to Mecca. The official ideology of the "Stern Gang," the Jewish terrorist group which operated in Palestine under the British Mandate, was an admixture of extreme right- and left-wing ideas. The IRA gravitated toward fas-

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cism in the 30's: for several years during the Second World War, it had a direct radio link with Berlin, and Sean Russell, its chief of staff, died during a German submarine mission on behalf of the Abwehr; today, the inspiration of the IRA Regulars seems to be mainly Trotskyite.

In short, all that can be stated safely about the guerrilla is that he does not conduct regular warfare. Beyond that, there is an endless number of possibilities depending upon historical, geographical, social, political, psychological, and economic circumstances. But if there is no clear dividing line between guerrilla warfare and other forms of violence, and if great caution has to be exercised in analyzing the political orientation of guerrilla movements, we can still attempt certain general observations about this stubbornly persistent phenomenon.

THE basic principles of guerrilla warfare are few and rather elementary: the terrain is critical, so is mobility; it is imperative to be always on the offensive; the element of surprise is all-important; the guerrilla must have at least the passive support of the local population; and he needs an excellent information network. If he can help it, the guerrilla will not fight a battle—his tactics are those of the raid and the ambush, of sabotage and terror. He will always go for the enemy's weak points. On the political level, the guerrillas must try to indoctrinate and mobilize the masses. The guerrilla knows that in his struggle there will be no quick and decisive victories; his aim is gradually to sap the enemy's strength.

All this is, of course, common sense, and it is not readily obvious why Mao, Che Guevara, and the others were needed to restate and popularize such basic insights. There is not a single practice in "modern" guerrilla warfare for which countless precedents cannot be found in history. The Bible provides many illustrations (young David, Gideon and the Midianites, the early Maccabees, and particularly Jonathan's forays from the Judean desert). In such cases, mobility, the element of surprise, and superior intelligence figured prominently; the aim was always to harass the enemy rather than to force a decisive encounter. Roman history is also replete with descriptions of guerrilla warfare, particularly in Spain and North Africa. About Tacfarinas, King of the Numidians, Tacitus writes that he played cat and mouse with the Romans, disappearing when attacked and attacking when the Romans retreated. Tacfarinas has been forgotten because unlike Mao (*Three Disciplinary Rules* and *Eight Points of Attention*) he did not bother to codify his tactics. The Spaniard Viriathus defeated countless Roman generals with their legions, pioneering guerrilla warfare in the mountains; unlike Régis Debray, Viriathus was not a product of the Ecole Normale, only a mere shepherd, but he applied

all the essential principles of guerrilla tactics with far greater success.

Even the combination of guerrilla and political-psychological warfare, usually thought to be an innovation of our age, is by no means new. The peasant Chouans in the Vendée who rose against the French Revolutionary government in 1793 have entered the history books as made up of the most backward elements—poachers, smugglers, deserters, and fanatical clergymen. But one of the main problems facing the armies of the French Revolution sent against them was the fact that the Chouans frequently showed leniency to their prisoners, and released them with special passes upon their word of honor not to fight again. The assumption was, of course, that word would spread and that defections from the enemy would be encouraged.

The leaders of the Spanish *guerrilleros*, the scourge of Napoleon's generals, were Espoz y Mina and El Empecinado, peasants from Navarre and Castile. They too successfully encouraged desertion from the enemy armies by treating prisoners leniently whenever they could; in the later stages of their campaign they even employed them as orderlies. Whenever possible they also paid for the food obtained from the local population. And they ruthlessly pursued and exterminated the native brigands, who at one time became a bigger plague than the French, robbing and plundering under the guise of patriotic struggle. As a contemporary biographer wrote of El Empecinado, "He was scrupulously attentive to the interests of the laboring classes."

The essentials of guerrilla warfare were not only known in practice, there were also many books on the theory of guerrilla and partisan warfare (or *petite guerre*, as it was usually called) written as far back as the late 18th and early 19th century, and containing almost everything that need be said on the subject. Clausewitz himself taught a course on guerrilla warfare at the Prussian military academy in 1810, in which he stressed time and again that it was absolutely essential for success not to antagonize the civilian population: if one used messengers, they should always get presents; if one could not pay for food, one should at least liberally distribute receipts with the promise of honoring them after victory. It was only in the second half of the 19th century that interest in the subject waned. When T. Miller Maguire, a barrister at the Inner Temple, lectured on guerrilla warfare in London in 1901, he told his listeners that there was not one work on the subject in any London book shop, and this despite the fact that "even in the reign of our Late Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria the British army had been engaged in no fewer than eighty-two small and irregular wars."

It was generally thought at the time that with the coming of big regular armies guerrilla warfare would be confined to semi-barbarous peoples in

distant countries; such warfare would never be successful in the long run, and gradually, with the rapid development of modern means of communication, it would disappear altogether. These assumptions were seemingly borne out by subsequent events. Guerrilla tactics in the Boer war were a last desperate attempt to thwart the British advance after the Boer regular forces had been defeated. In the First World War, guerrillas played an insignificant role, and so too in the Spanish civil war. There was a good deal of partisan warfare in the Second World War, but its military importance was greatly exaggerated. In no theater of war did partisans play a decisive role; even in Yugoslavia they were restricted to a relatively small part of the country right up to the end, far away from the centers of industry and communications. The only major exception was, of course, China, but Mao's forces never constituted a serious threat to the Japanese, and they defeated the Kuomintang only by reaching—in accordance with Mao's doctrine—"a higher stage and transforming themselves gradually into a regular army." With the dawning of the nuclear age, however, guerrilla warfare—in Vietnam, Algeria, Cuba, and elsewhere—came into its own again.

IN WHAT conditions has guerrilla warfare spread and in what conditions has it been successful? By and large, the guerrilla phenomenon has appeared in the context of the national struggle against foreign invaders. It is true that economic and social factors played an important role in the Vendée and in China, in Mexico and in Cuba. But the nationalist component was also present in all those cases. For the Vendéens, the French troops sent against them were almost literally foreigners; if not for the Japanese occupation of much of China, it is doubtful that Mao's forces would have been able to prevail over Chiang's armies; and the patriotic slogans in Castro's campaigns and other Latin American guerrilla movements are a matter of historical record.

Various reasons have been adduced to explain the failure of the Greek guerrillas after the Second World War, of the Huks in the Philippines, and, most recently, of the Guevarists and others in Latin America. It has been argued that these movements lacked the benefit of Communist leadership, or that the "objective" revolutionary situation was not ripe, or that they committed various strategic or tactical errors, such as directly confronting the enemy in combat before they were ready to do so. But these arguments usually do not survive closer inspection. The twist is that against domestic governments, however weak, success has been rare, even when the guerrillas have been experienced and strong, and "objective" conditions apparently propitious. Thus the guerrilla movements in Guatemala and Venezuela, in Bolivia and Uruguay, all failed even though they

faced weak governments and ineffective regular armies, even though they had the Cuban example to guide them, and even though social conditions were certainly conducive to revolution. On the other hand, against foreign enemies, however strong, even weak guerrilla movements, lacking direction and military experience, have frequently succeeded. For the colonial powers have had to cope with the pressure of public opinion at home (Britain in Cyprus and Palestine), or with general war-weariness (France in Algeria), or with international condemnation (Portugal), and sooner or later they have decided that the game was not worth the candle—and this despite the fact that they rarely suffered decisive military defeats. Most colonies, indeed, gained independence after the Second World War merely through political pressure and without major military struggles; the metropolis gradually realized that the maintenance of colonial empires had become too costly.

Among the other preconditions for success in modern guerrilla warfare, outside aid is well-nigh decisive. Not all foreign-supported guerrilla wars have been won, but it would be exceedingly difficult to name even one which succeeded without supplies and other help from abroad. In the American Revolution and in Spain under Napoleon, the irregulars went into battle on more than one occasion with two or three cartridges each, expecting to get their ammunition from the enemy; but such tactics became suicidal with the appearance of automatic weapons. Gone too are the days when a few determined men with a handful of rifles on trusty horses could harass the enemy for many months without great danger to themselves if they behaved with elementary prudence. To launch and sustain a modern guerrilla campaign not only takes money—and more money than robbing banks can usually yield—but it also takes things (sophisticated weapons and wireless equipment, open supply lines, support by foreign embassies) which cannot be bought with money. There is a fair amount of international cooperation among terrorists: Irish, Japanese, Turkish, Arab, Latin American, North American, West German, Italian, and others are known to have cooperated on various occasions. But in the last resort, a guerrilla movement with any hope of lasting success needs a major sponsor such as Castro or Qaddafi, the Soviet Union or China. Even Mao himself was able to start the offensive which eventually led him to victory only after the Japanese Kwangtung army had been destroyed in Manchuria, and after the Soviets had turned over their equipment to him, including some 4,000 field guns, 600 tanks, more than 800 aircraft, and a small fleet—a fact of which the Russians have never ceased reminding their former allies. Similarly, the Algerians had their bases in Tunisia, EOKA got its supplies and advisers from Greece, and the IRA would not last long but for its lifeline from the Irish Republic.

THE great exception is Cuba, where Castro succeeded against a domestic government and with comparatively little outside assistance. This victory encouraged the belief that guerrilla warfare could become as effective an instrument of domestic revolution throughout Latin America as it had been of colonial revolt.* Such optimism seemed reasonable in view of the weakness of the political structures in most Latin American countries, the exploitation of the rural population, the absence in most cases of a reform movement providing a political alternative, and the existence of many revolutionary cells, mainly in the universities, constituting a reservoir of reliable cadres.

Hence in the early 60's it appeared that the victory of guerrilla insurrections throughout Latin America was only a question of time. In Venezuela the center of gravity in the beginning was in the towns: subsequently, under the capable leadership of Douglas Bravo, rural foci were established. Ten years later, however, the Venezuelan revolutionary forces were in total disarray and Castro and Bravo were denouncing each other as traitors. Developments in other Latin American countries took a similar turn.† The reasons can be established without much difficulty:

1) If the guerrillas were inspired by Castro's experience and had assimilated its lessons, the government forces too had learned from the Cuban example. Initially unprepared for counter-insurgency, they became quite adept at it; the use of helicopters, for instance, made guerrilla activities in the open country very difficult indeed. But it was not only a question of military tactics: in Peru, for example, far-reaching agrarian reforms stole the guerrillas' thunder, and a sizable proportion of their forces went over to the government.

2) In most Latin American countries (as in Ulster, the Arab world, Portuguese Africa, etc.) there was not just one guerrilla movement but several; their internal splits and their tortuous relations with the Communist and Trotskyite parties constituted a permanent cause of friction. The Cuban revolution had developed in its early phase quite independently of the Communists, but in other Latin American countries the revolutionary potential belonged to one left-wing party or another, and no incipient guerrilla movement could afford to ignore this elementary fact of political life. The guerrillas (with the notable exception of Uruguay) became involved in sectarian in-fighting on ideological, organizational, and simply personal lines.

3) Following the Cuban example, the guerrillas saw the countryside as their main field of action, yet they found it exceedingly difficult to gain the support of the peasants. The leaders of the guerrilla movement were in their great majority city people of middle- or upper-class origin—young men (and in a very few cases, women)

who quite literally had no common language with the peasant population, which belonged to all intents and purposes to another race. The city revolutionaries with all their enthusiasm had great difficulty in adapting themselves to the hard life of the countryside; they were genuinely shocked by the miserable lot of the peasant, but at the same time they shared the contempt for manual labor deeply rooted in Latin American society. Since as revolutionaries they had to live, work, and fight side by side with peasants and manual workers, this instinctive attitude which only a few of them could altogether overcome did not exactly make for smooth relations with the toiling masses. For the subsequent return of the guerrillas from the countryside to the city a number of sound tactical reasons could be adduced, but it is also true that they were only too happy to get back to a milieu more familiar in every respect and certainly less arduous.

4) The peasants (*campesinos*) had a tendency to adopt a wait-and-see attitude rather than embrace the revolutionary cause on sight. If the *guerrilleros* successfully defied the government forces, they could count on at least the passive support of the rural population. But if they suffered a setback and if it appeared that the forces of law and order were stronger, there would be no help for them, and they would find themselves betrayed to the authorities. But even if the peasants were willing to join in their fight, they would do so only within the district in which they lived. This has been one of the traditional weaknesses of guerrilla warfare: peasants cannot easily be made into professional revolutionaries, giving up their ties and roots.

5) The guerrillas were caught on the horns of several dilemmas for which there were no easy answers. If they retreated into remote, unpopulated areas that were not easily accessible, they would be secure but ineffectual—as Guevara had already noted. If they opposed elections (as in Venezuela), this would damage their image as staunch fighters for democracy; but if, on the contrary, they contested elections, they would be roundly beaten—as in Uruguay—and by the extreme reactionary forces at that. If they waged guerrilla warfare in small elitist conspirational

* Guevara said in his *La Guerra de Guerrillas* that the Cuban example had taught three lessons: "The popular forces can win a war against a regular army; one does not always have to wait until all conditions for a revolution exist, for these can be created; in underdeveloped Latin America the rural regions are bound to be the theater of guerrilla warfare."

† The best analysis of the rise and fall of the guerrilla movement in Latin America is F. R. Allemann's recent *Macht und Ohnmacht der Guerrilla* (Munich, 1974). Richard Gott's and Mercier Vega's earlier books are now partly out of date. There are in addition many specialized studies such as R. L. Manlin's *Soldiers, Guerrillas and Politics in Colombia* (1973). Régis Debray's *Les Epreuves du Feu* (2 vols., Paris, 1974) is a not uncritically enthusiastic survey of guerrilla activities in several Latin American countries.

groups, consisting mainly of students (the Tupamaros in the early phase), they would be relatively safe from detection; the moment they tried to broaden their base and mobilize the masses, they would expose themselves to infiltration by enemy agents.

6) A successful guerrilla movement could weaken or bring about the overthrow of a relatively democratic regime. Eventually (it was assumed) the democratic regime would be replaced by a reactionary military dictatorship which would within a short time antagonize the middle class and especially the intelligentsia so that, as in Cuba, the guerrillas would gain the support of the majority of the population. But not all military dictators were as ineffectual as Batista, who had admitted defeat after fewer than three hundred of his men had been killed by Castro's followers in a campaign lasting several years. Other dictators showed far greater determination and ruthlessness; through counter-terror and torture they succeeded in paralyzing or altogether destroying the guerrilla movements (Guatemala, Brazil). Worldwide public opinion was enlisted against the atrocities, but appeals and manifestoes coming from foreign lands showed diminishing returns and were in any case a poor substitute for guerrilla victory.

7) While success smiled on them, the guerrillas were on top of the world, but they were not very good losers, even though they knew, in theory, that their struggle would be long and protracted. They had been spoiled by the Cuban example; by their character and mental make-up, Latin American guerrillas were *golpistas*, burning to overthrow the system with one big push. Psychologically, they needed quick successes, and if these did not come there would be despondency and mutual recriminations. They were capable of making great sacrifices and exertions for a short time, but not of a sustained effort or of fortitude in adversity.

In consequence of all this, there was a growing tendency, which reached its apex after Guevara's death in Bolivia, to turn from armed struggle in the countryside to individual acts of terror in the city. There had been such actions before; one could point, for instance, to the assassinations carried out by the Russian Social Revolutionaries between 1881 and 1914, to the IRA in their battles against the British, to IZL and LEHI in Mandatory Palestine. In Latin America, too, urban terrorism (even if only on a limited scale) had been tried before—in Caracas, in Guatemala City, and in Montevideo. But official doctrine had been against urban guerrillas. Castro had called the city the "grave of revolutionaries," Guevara had been critical, and Debray had explained in considerable detail that while life in the Sierra would harden (and proletarianize) the bourgeois intellectual, the city was bound to corrupt even the best comrades.

BUT the warnings of the Castro-Guevara-Debray school fell on deaf ears. Guerrilla war in the countryside had become too difficult. Furthermore, a good case could be made in favor of attacking the enemy at the very center, in the place where he was most vulnerable, causing a maximum of disruption and discrediting the government. As Carlos Marighela, the Brazilian theoretician of urban guerrilla warfare, put it: "It is necessary to turn the political crisis into armed conflict by violent actions that will force the authorities to transform the political situation into a military situation. This will alienate the masses who from then on will revolt against the army and the police and blame them for the state of affairs."* From 1965 to 1972, hundreds of banks were attacked, stores were robbed, political leaders, businessmen, and foreign diplomats were kidnapped, "enemies" were executed or held in "people's prisons." The general purpose was to spread fear and confusion, to conduct a war of nerves, and to establish a "parallel government," comparable to the Soviets in Petrograd in 1917.

And indeed, the urban guerrillas in Uruguay and Brazil did for a time seem effective. The slums of the big cities—and equally the upper-class residential areas—provided far better cover for operations than the Sierra. It proved easier to get money and weapons in the city than in the countryside, and to collect information about the targets for attack. The daring actions also found an echo far beyond Latin America. If the old-style guerrilla tactics had been applicable only to backward countries, the new urban guerrilla warfare seemed to offer great possibilities for almost every country in the world, including the most developed ones. Soon urban guerrilla warfare found its imitators in the United States, in West Germany, in Italy, and elsewhere.

Nevertheless, the startling successes of the first years were again followed by grave setbacks and in some places by total collapse. One does not have to look very far for the causes of defeat. The forces of order, at first unable to cope with this new danger, were learning quickly. However strictly the rules of conspiracy were observed, sooner or later the traces of a single Tupamaro would lead the police to a whole group, to its arms store, and eventually to its headquarters, and once this happened escape was difficult, far more so than in the Sierra. Marighela's assumption that the police "systematically fails" and that it would find no way to halt guerrilla operations was overly optimistic; a few months after the publication of the *Mini Manuel*, he himself was killed in a police ambush.

* *Mini Manuel do Guerrilheiro Urbano*, first published in June 1969. There are several English translations, for instance in Robert Moss: *Urban Guerrilla Warfare*, Adelphi Paper 79, London 1971. See also Marighela's *For the Liberation of Brazil*, London 1971.

Individual failures quite apart, the whole urban guerrilla strategy was found wanting. The Algerian example was often cited as a recipe for success by urban guerrillas; countless studies were published in many languages on the subject. But it was again the old story: the FLN could compel the French colonial government to evacuate Algeria, but under no circumstances would a French guerrilla movement have been able to take over France even from the weak governments of the Fourth Republic. It is one thing to appear as the spearhead of the national movement against the hated foreigner; it is another, infinitely more difficult, task to compete with other native political parties in the struggle for power.

If the recent guerrilla record has been on the whole one of failure, this is not to say that in one country or another owing to some fortunate constellation (a prolonged political or economic crisis, able guerrilla leadership, and bungling by the forces of law and order), the guerrillas may not be successful. There certainly exists a latent revolutionary situation in many Latin American countries. But more likely than not, even in Latin America, political and social change will be brought about not through guerrilla insurrections, but through coups carried out by populist army officers.

IN ADOPTING terrorist tactics, the contemporary guerrilla has quite consciously broken with the classical Marxist tradition. True, commenting on the recapture of Vienna in 1848 by counterrevolutionary forces, Marx said that revolutionary terrorism was the only way to shorten the agony of the old order. But he modified his views later on, condemning, for instance, the Clerkenwell bomb attempt by the Fenians in 1867. When Engels wrote a new preface to Marx's *Class Struggle in France* in 1895, he said that the time of surprise coups, of barricades, and of street fighting by small elites, was over once and for all. Again in Russia, Marxism, represented by Plekhanov, made its debut on the political scene condemning the policy of assassination practiced by the Narodniki. Lenin justified terrorism in certain circumstances—for example, in Latvia in 1905—and emphasized that the rejection of partisan warfare by the socialist movement was a matter of expediency, not of principle. But in later years he agreed with Trotsky, who wrote in 1911 that a pinch of powder and a slug of lead were not sufficient to change the social order. A terrorist attempt could at best cause temporary confusion in the ruling circles, but the capitalist state did not rest upon ministers and could not be destroyed with them; the mechanism remained intact and continued to function. With a few exceptions Soviet Communist strategy ever since has been against individual terror, and has taken a dim view both of “revolutionary *putschism*” and guerrilla warfare, urban and rural alike.

The modern guerrilla, breaking with this perspective, argues that, *pace* historical materialism, personalities are sometimes of decisive importance; had Hitler been shot in front of the Feldherrnhalle in November 1923, or Lenin upon his arrival at the Finland Station, or if Mao had met with some accident on the Long March, world history would almost certainly have taken a different course. If it is said that these have been exceptions and that most politicians are anything but indispensable, especially in the constitutional democracies against which the contemporary guerrilla often fights, his answer is that constitutional democracies are a particularly easy target because their hands are tied. “Fulgencio Batista,” Robert Taber wrote quite accurately in *The War of the Flea*, “fell not because he was a dictator but because he could not entirely break with the conventions of a country with democratic institutions.” Indeed, not only constitutional democracies but modern governments in general are highly conscious of “world opinion.” As Taber says:

They do not like to be visited by Human Rights Commissions or Freedom of the Press Committees; their need of foreign investment, foreign loans, foreign markets, satisfactory trade relations, and so on requires that they be in more or less good standing with a larger community of interests. Often too, they are members of military alliances. Consequently, they must maintain the appearance of stability, in order to assure the other members of the community that contracts will be honored, that treaties will be upheld, that loans will be repaid with interest, that investments will continue to produce profits and be safe.

Hence in destroying the stable image of the government and creating a “climate of collapse,” terrorism is, according to this argument, an effective revolutionary weapon.

But the trouble with this strategy is that it usually works only up to the point where the terrorist ceases to be a mere nuisance and becomes a real danger to the regime. Once this point is reached, the state—however much concerned about the UN, the Human Rights Commission, and adverse publicity in the press—will react in kind, cruelly but effectively, unhampered by laws and conventions. Once the Brazilian ALN and other such groups opted for individual terror, the Rio government responded by indiscriminate counter-terror: terrorists and their sympathizers (and no doubt quite a few innocent bystanders) simply disappeared without a trace. There were no trials and no death sentences, which made it all the more difficult to organize protest movements abroad. Despite outcries over bloody repression, the stable image of the government was not destroyed, the economy continued to prosper, and a “climate of collapse” was not created.

Even a democratic country like Israel will only tolerate terrorism up to a certain point. So long

as incidents such as Ma'alot and Kiryat Shmoneh remain relatively rare, the Israeli government will act within the limits of the law. But if these attacks were to become a frequent occurrence, public pressure for drastic and illegal countermeasures would become overwhelming. In taking such measures (e.g., the summary execution of terrorist prisoners), Israel would, of course, stand condemned in the court of world public opinion, but it would also put an end at least to some forms of terrorism. Democratic regimes do value their standing in the community of nations, but once their existence is threatened, they will usually opt for survival rather than the rule of law, and they will no longer be concerned about foreign sympathies or even foreign investments.

IN SPEAKING of the warfare being carried on against Israel (and against Israel's sympathizers outside Israel), however, one must recognize that one is dealing with a unique phenomenon for which it is almost impossible to find a historical parallel or even a correct term. These attacks are aimed not against a colonial power nor against a relatively small ruling group, but at the destruction of a whole society. In contrast to guerrilla movements elsewhere, the Palestinians are not interested in winning the sympathy of the local (Israeli) population. This makes political warfare unnecessary and it also affects the political perspective of the struggle. Since the Palestinians cannot defeat the Israeli army, they can be, at best, the vanguard in the struggle against the "Zionist invader." They can try to prevent a "sellout" by the Arab governments, they may succeed in triggering a war, but they cannot possibly bring it to a successful conclusion.

In its strategies and tactical aspects, too, Arab irregular warfare against Israel is *sui generis*. Guerrilla warfare is usually carried on from bases within the native country. Fatah tried to do this immediately after the Six-Day War, but the terrain was unsuitable, the population uncooperative, and the Israeli countermeasures quite effective. After a few weeks, Fatah headquarters had to be removed from the West Bank to the other side of the Jordan; it became a guerrilla movement in exile—which is to say that it ceased to be a guerrilla movement in any meaningful sense of the term. The next stage witnessed the infiltration of small units from Jordan into the occupied territories, but these tactics also failed. Most units were intercepted after a few days, frequently after a few hours; one or two succeeded in remaining undetected in Israel up to two months, but only because they refrained from attacking the enemy. The next stage brought the shelling of Israeli settlements from across the Jordanian border. This resulted in Israeli counterattacks, and ultimately in the showdown between the Palestinian irregulars and the Jordanian army. Fatah and the other terrorist groups therefore had

to transfer their activities to Lebanon and (to a lesser and much more restricted extent) Syria. They turned to hijacking planes, mailing letter bombs, and attacking individual Jews—Israelis and non-Israelis alike—outside Israel. They still pretended to be acting from inside the "homeland," but in fact the national liberation struggle was conducted in other lands and quite frequently with the help of foreign nationals (French, Japanese, and Nicaraguan).*

Other aspects of the Palestinian struggle against Israel are also unique. The Palestinians are undoubtedly the most affluent terrorist movement in history. Fatah alone has reportedly received some \$60 million from the oil-producing countries, and the smaller organizations have probably been given some \$10-20 million more. This is a very substantial sum, considering that there are only about 10,000 members on the payroll of these groups, that these men also receive financial assistance from the United Nations Relief Organization, and that in all probability they do not have to pay for most of their weapons and equipment either. The abundance of money makes it possible for the Palestinians to engage in all kinds of operations which are beyond the reach of other, less fortunate, guerrilla movements. At the same time, there is a very real danger of corruption and demoralization: guerrillas are supposed to be lean and hungry, a condition which exposure to life in the Hilton and the dolce vita of Beirut night life does nothing to encourage.

In one respect, however, the Palestinian "resistance" is not at all unique, for like the urban guerrillas in most Latin American countries, it is deeply split internally, albeit along different lines. Fatah is apolitical, its leaders are "Palestine Firsters," they have deliberately refrained from taking sides on the various major issues which divide the Arab world (Pan-Arabism, the struggle between radicals and moderates). The other, smaller groups are more radical; they regard the struggle against Israel as merely one stage in the overthrow of the present Arab regimes. Much of this radicalism is admittedly purely verbal; there is, in fact, a great deal of collaboration between the "radicals" and the Arab governments (with the exception of Jordan and Saudi Arabia) and the assumption of

* If there is no precedent in the annals of guerrilla warfare for such guerrilla-in-exile practices, there are certain parallels between the Palestinian organizations and the Macedonian IMRO. Between the two world wars, IMRO established a state within a state inside Bulgaria. With the assistance of the Bulgarian government, IMRO guerrillas frequently crossed the borders, attacking targets in Yugoslavia and assassinating Yugoslav officials. Whenever the Yugoslavs complained, the Bulgarians indignantly denied any knowledge. This state of affairs lasted for almost two decades, but when relations between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia became more normal in the mid-30's, IMRO was effectively suppressed and has not been heard of since, even though the Macedonian issue again became a bone of contention between the two countries after the Second World War.

some Western well-wishers that these groups are outposts of the teachings of Lenin, Trotsky, and Mao is quite unwarranted.

There are some indications that Fatah will not stick much longer to its political neutrality; the main reason perhaps is the growth of Communist influence on the West Bank. Both the Israelis and Fatah (for different reasons, to be sure) have discouraged political activity in the occupied territories, and the Communists have made good use of this policy. In the absence of any competition, they are today the largest and best organized political group by far on the West Bank. It may well be that much of their following will disintegrate once they have to face competition, but for the moment they certainly constitute a real threat to Fatah.

Despite all their setbacks, the Palestinian terrorist organizations have succeeded in their main aim, which is to keep the Palestinian issue alive. Their failure to establish an effective resistance movement inside Israel was regarded by the Israelis as a decisive defeat, but with guerrilla warfare in the generally accepted meaning of the term impossible inside Israel, the Palestinians found by trial and error that there were other ways of carrying on the struggle, and that publicity was the decisive weapon in this particular fight. Hence the decision to hijack planes, the attacks against foreign ambassadors in Khartoum, the Munich massacre, and similar operations. These actions were widely condemned, but what was infinitely more important, they were given a great deal of publicity. The Israelis, it was said, had driven the Arab refugees to these acts of despair, and there would be no peace in the Middle East unless justice were done to the Palestinian cause. It remains doubtful whether this strategy would have succeeded but for the growing dependence of the industrialized countries on Arab oil, but there was an auspicious international constellation and the Palestinians made the most of it. Confidence has risen dramatically in recent months. The Zionist state, as the Palestinian terrorists see it, is in a condition of advanced decay; a few more determined pushes and it will collapse altogether. "We believed the struggle would last a hundred years, now we think it will last only ten," one of the Palestinian leaders in Beirut was quoted as saying the other day.

YET the luck of the Palestinian terrorists may be running out. They were assured of publicity in the relatively quiet days of 1969-71, but as the world situation takes a turn for the worse, the whole perspective will change, and the hijacking of planes or attacks against the odd border settlement will no longer necessarily get front-page treatment in the world press. The Palestinians will have to develop new tactics, and this will not be easy. Furthermore, their opposition to any political compromise, even a tempo-

rary one, has brought them into conflict with the Arab governments, and will increasingly exasperate the Russians who of late have tried hard to teach the Palestinians the ABC's of political warfare.* But the transition from armed struggle, involving all-out opposition, to politics, involving compromise, is always difficult, and the Palestinians are the captives of their own slogans. Having announced for so long the impending liberation of the whole homeland, how can they possibly accept anything less? If some Fatah leaders were to opt for a political solution, they would be outflanked by the more extreme elements in their own ranks or among the opposing groups. They would be accused of treason to the cause, and since the accusers would have Qadafi's support, the threat would have to be taken seriously. If the moderates persevered, there would be terror and counter-terror in their ranks which might ultimately affect the Arab governments.

Nevertheless, the Soviets have tried to induce the Palestinians to accept as an interim solution the creation of a Palestinian Arab state on the West Bank. This, in the Soviet view, is the most they can expect, given the present balance of power; as the balance changes, it could well be the first stage on the way to the realization of their more ambitious aims. But the Palestinians have so far stubbornly rejected these proposals, partly because this scheme is very problematic from their point of view. Once a small Palestinian Arab state is created, the impetus of the "resistance movement" will inevitably decline and perhaps peter out altogether. There will be a struggle for power inside the new state, the Palestinian case will lose its urgency so far as the Arab countries and the world at large are concerned. For all the Palestinians know, there may never be a "second stage."

At first, most Israelis tended to belittle the role of the Palestinians. They were slow to recognize that after the initial failure to launch traditional guerrilla warfare, the Palestinians learned from their mistakes, adjusted their approach, and became more sophisticated in their tactics. Since the October war there has been a tendency in Israel to overestimate their importance; militarily, the Palestinians do not constitute a danger and never will. While it is, of course, impossible to prevent the occasional ambush or surprise attack, a more developed system of defensive security measures will reduce attacks inside Israel to a minimum.

* L. Tolgunov, a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU, writes in *Izvestia* (July 30, 1974) that there has been a basic change of policy among the Palestinians: "If formerly their attitude was intransigent with regard to the very existence of Israel, which means that they advocated the destruction of the state, . . . most Palestinian organizations now take a more realistic line." This is about as correct as the following statement by the same writer: "Arafat, Habash, and Hawatmeh talk about the Soviet Union as the force without which the Palestinian resistance movement cannot exist."

The terrorists' political motivation and their tactics have also baffled most Israelis—particularly the indiscriminate slaughter of innocents, and the singling out of children and women as victims or hostages. The exploits of the Palestinian terrorists certainly compare unfavorably with the activities of the resistance in Western Europe during the Second World War; there is a genocidal element in their campaign. Nor are the remote-control tactics frequently chosen (such as the incident in Rome when terrorists used their British girlfriends to smuggle time bombs into a plane) shining examples of revolutionary heroism. But it is equally true that guerrilla warfare has never been an occupation for gentlemen and that it has become even more cruel of late; Zapata and Pancho Villa were great humanists compared with the IRA, the Palestinian terrorists, or indeed the perpetrators of the recent massacres in Cyprus. In addition, while Israelis are measured by Western standards and apply a similar standard to their enemies, the Palestinians belong to a different political culture. Recalling what Iraqis and Syrians have done to each other at times of political upheaval, it would be unrealistic to expect the Palestinians to behave differently toward their enemies.

As a result, the Israelis may consider concessions to Egypt and even Syria, but they are not willing to negotiate with the Palestinians. The Russians claim that the Palestinians have become more realistic and now think in terms of a political solution, but the PLO, let alone Dr. Habash, have not yet given up their hope of destroying Israel. Their perspective is that of a new full-scale war, or a series of wars.

SEEN in historical perspective, guerrilla warfare, per se, is neither good nor bad, certainly not more reprehensible morally than war itself. On many occasions it has been a perfectly legitimate, sometimes the only possible, method of resisting national or social oppression. Such oppression has not gone out of fashion in the contemporary world and it has resulted in guerrilla warfare wherever physical conditions have been favorable. But at the same time it has become more and more obvious that what was once known as guerrilla warfare is gradually giving way in many countries to terrorist tactics, pure and simple, on the part of small groups (whether of the "Left," as in Argentina, or of the "Right," as in Italy, or raving mad, like the Symbionese Liberation Army) trying to impose their will on the majority in the struggle for power. Against "revolutionary nihilism" of this order, even the practitioners of terror themselves have frequently warned. When President Garfield was assassinated in 1881, the Central Committee of the Russian *Narodnaya Volya* sharply denounced the murder; in a land where the citizens

were free to express their ideas, political assassination reflected a despotic state of mind and was therefore to be condemned. And Che Guevara sixty years later: "Wherever a government has come to power through consulting the people, even through fraudulent means, and maintains at least a semblance of legality, there the guerrilla seed will not germinate because the possibilities of legal struggle have not yet been exhausted." But the terrorist of present-day vintage is no believer in democracy in any shape or form; he has no wish to exhaust the possibilities of the legal struggle which is tedious and does not guarantee success. He looks for short cuts, for ways to compel democratic regimes to adopt dictatorial measures and thus reveal their "true face."

It is sometimes argued that terrorism is bound to decrease once society becomes less repressive. Such an assessment rests on an overly optimistic view of the rationality of human behavior. However just the social order, however democratic the political regime, there will always be disaffected, alienated, and highly aggressive people claiming that the present state of affairs is intolerable and that any change will be for the better. In the past, society was less exposed to such attacks, simply because the means of destruction were far less effective. Under present conditions, on the other hand, a handful of madmen or fanatics can cause a great deal of havoc, and the end is not yet in sight. The hijacking of aircraft was an early and, on the whole, ineffective prelude to a new age of terror. (In 1969-70 some 164 civil aircraft were hijacked, in 1973-74 only a mere handful.) But it seems only a question of time before weapons like the SAM-7, which weighs a mere 25 pounds, costs less than \$1,000 to produce, and can be operated by a child, will be used against civilian planes. The first recorded attempt, at Ostia near Rome, was thwarted in time. One day the terrorists may be more successful.

A nuclear device is more expensive. A bomb such as the one produced by the Indians costs an estimated \$15 million—which does not, however, put it out of the reach of the more affluent terrorist groups. In the near future it may also be possible to produce nuclear material at a fraction of the cost or simply to steal it. Thus nuclear blackmail or the explosion of nuclear devices by self-styled guerrillas seems at least as likely a possibility as nuclear war between states. Against this threat dictatorial regimes will be in a much better position to take effective countermeasures than free societies. Democratic government will be under heavy attack in any case in the years to come, and it is not unthinkable that in some countries at least the "guerrillas," operating under the banner of national and social liberation, will cheerfully provide the last few nails needed for its coffin.

Women and Success

Sonya Rudikoff

IN 1911, when Martha Graham was seventeen, she went with her father to see Ruth St. Denis dance. The occasion inspired her so profoundly that she never lost its meaning: "The rest of her life was to be spent trying to realize in her own person the vision that she saw in Ruth St. Denis," writes her biographer.* She was nearly ten years too old to think of a career in ballet—they begin at eight or nine—and with her father's death two years later, and the need to help support her mother and sisters, there was little reason to predict much success as a dancer for Martha Graham. Indeed, not until she was thirty-two did she give her first independent dance recital, accompanied by Louis Horst—thirty-two, what a ridiculous age for a dancer!—and the future was not promising. Frequently it was dismal, during the Depression and war years, when Martha Graham often despaired over her work, and when there was never any money. Now, these many years later, her career shows different proportions: she not only stands upon the long and remarkable achievement of a great dancer's life, but at eighty she has once more renewed herself and her work. It could be called success at this point, by almost anyone's standards, although many times in the past it did not look like that.

Similarly in 1891, when Maria Sklodowska left Poland at the age of twenty-four to go to Paris, she had struggled until then to learn some math and chemistry by herself, but the future was uncertain. As a governess in a congenial but demanding family, she was poor, and there were no fellowships or grants then, not for anyone, male or female. Her oldest sister was studying medicine in Paris, with Maria's financial help, and now the youngest sister would get her chance: she could anticipate perhaps a hard teacher's life in a Warsaw girl's school, like her mother and father, although recent Russian edicts prevented Poles from occupying executive or administrative positions. What actually came for her was a hard life as Marie Curie, but with Nobel honors, great discoveries, and immense personal rewards. Still, long

after she had been acclaimed throughout the world, there were no perquisites of success for either Marie or Pierre Curie, and the laboratory where radium was discovered looked to an eminent German chemist of the time like "a cross between a stable and a potato cellar," and he added, "if I had not seen the worktable with the chemical apparatus, I would have thought it a practical joke."†

Stories like these come to mind as a background for the contemporary preoccupation with women's opportunities for achievement in the professions and public life. There is widespread awareness of certain obvious facts of discrimination against women which have traditionally interfered with their professional achievements, such as disenfranchisement, legal impediments, or exclusion from professional schools or even—until the latter part of the 19th century—from higher education altogether. As many of these patent inequities have been revised or reversed, attention has shifted—as it has in the instance of other groups excluded from the public arena—to the psychological and social costs of this historical pattern of exclusion, and to the uneasiness or anxiety attendant upon a sudden admission to previously unattainable rights, duties, and privileges. Recently, however, a more complex psychology has been engaged to elucidate the contemporary situation and to provide guidance for the future. Amid programs for affirmative action, and changes in the ostensibly harmful sex-linked, sex-stereotyped education, the idea has gained currency that women have often been handicapped not only by a fear of failure—not unknown to men either—but by a fear of success as well.

It was a study done about ten years ago by Matina Horner, a psychologist, that first seemed to offer conclusive evidence that the psychological barriers to success for women might be as damaging and exclusionary as the explicit objective technical barriers so long in existence.** According to Dr. Horner, women not only fear

* *Martha Graham: A Biography*, by Don McDonagh, Praeger (1973), 341 pp., \$10.95.

† *Marie Curie*, by Robert Reid, Saturday Review Press-Dutton, (1974), 349 pp., \$8.95.

** *Sex Differences in Achievement Motivations and Performance in Competitive and Non-Competitive Situations*. (Unpublished dissertation.)

SONYA RUDIKOFF, essayist and critic, has written for *Partisan Review*, *Dissent*, *Arts*, and other magazines. Recent articles by her in COMMENTARY include "The Problem of Euthanasia" (February 1974) and "Marriage and Household" (June 1973).

failure but they may also fear the success which would either explicitly interfere with their womanly goals of home and family or more subtly alienate and threaten the men whom they encounter both as colleagues and in a more personal relation. This new phrasing of an old dilemma appealed to many and was rapidly adopted as both an explanation for the fate of professional women and as a guide for the future, for women's education, and for child rearing.

Indeed, so rapidly has the idea about the fear of success been adopted that in 1972 a conference on women's achievement in the sciences, held at the New York Academy of Sciences, was almost entirely influenced by it, and, in the collection of papers published afterward explicitly called *Women and Success: The Anatomy of Achievement*,* Dr. Horner's hypothesis was treated as virtually axiomatic. The original research for the monograph—Dr. Horner's doctoral dissertation—was done in 1964 (only a year after the publication of *The Feminine Mystique*) and it was based on responses of 90 female and 88 male subjects at a large Midwestern university. (Dr. Horner's degree was from Michigan.) The subjects were asked to provide fantasy material about imaginary male and female students who find themselves at the top of their medical school class, and Dr. Horner's conclusions were developed from her analysis of this material. Of course, quite a lot has changed in the past ten years—the growth of the new feminist movement, the noticeable increase in women entering professions and business, the greater visibility of women in high-paying and decision-making positions, and a widespread change in public attitudes about women's goals and capabilities. The changes are not traceable only to the past decade, perhaps, but became simply more prominent. In addition, the number of women in the labor force reached the size of a critical mass, and the subject of women appeared everywhere. In response to these perceptible changes, Dr. Horner, now president of Radcliffe, provided for the 1972 conference a recapitulation of her earlier hypothesis, strengthened by new 1970 data on fear of success among women (it increased from 65 per cent in 1964 to 88.2 per cent in 1970). Another study of women at a "major Eastern law school" indicated that 86.6 per cent of the women showed a strong fear of success.

Such findings may puzzle the interested observer. Hypotheses and conclusions about human behavior based on the written fantasies of fewer than two hundred young people at a Midwestern university in the 1960's may be adequate for a doctoral dissertation, but the sense of the common reader may not be persuaded by the experiences of a group so limited in age, experience, and ambitions. Apart from that methodological problem, the common reader may wonder why a decade of women's liberation and enlarging femi-

nine prospects and affirmative action should have accomplished so little, should have in fact made the situation worse. Indeed, it is a bit troubling to know what the outcome might be, if the increasing enjoyment of ostensible rights is more threatening than deprivation. Surely, this would not be any kind of argument for a further increase in intervention to overcome centuries of discrimination.

Although there are countless alumni of the school of hard knocks, there has not yet been a move to accredit that institution, nor should there be. When the matter is pondered in its larger outlines, however, with historical figures taken into account, it becomes clear that much of the modern ideology about women and success and achievement is either wrong or unhelpful in understanding anything about the present or the past. It refers primarily to extremely limited and atypical groups of women, such as top executives in business, whose careers may not be illuminating about anything else.

THE new ideology tells us nothing, for example, about a woman like Rose Kennedy, whose memoirs have recently been published.† Of course we all know the story well; anyone who has waited in a doctor's office or at the hairdresser's leafing through current magazines is familiar with the entire saga: Honey Fitz, the Mayor of Boston, the lovely daughter, marriage to Joe Kennedy, all those children, Hyannisport, Wall Street, the London Embassy, American politics, the mother of Senators, Queen Mother of Camelot, the terrible tragedies, the piety, the whole drama. It has become a national saga. Mrs. Kennedy is what Truman Capote calls a public perfect person: everything about her is so carefully buffed and refined and measured and perfected that few revelations come through, and only bits of the genuine, such as Jack's wearing saddle shoes under his commencement robe at Harvard, and Joe, Sr. saying, when they were staying at Windsor Castle with King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, "Rose, this is a helluva long way from East Boston!" Radical women's liberationists will be aghast at her willingness to accept the parameters of her life from Mayor's daughter to Ambassador's wife to President's mother, and her willingness to accept—even her complicity in—the Kennedy ethos of competition and triumph. Whether it was a children's swim meet or a sailing race or tennis or politics, Joe Kennedy made it clear that winning was the only thing that mattered, even, as in the famous touch football, winning by changing the rules. Rose never seems to have objected, she even aided and rein-

* Edited by Ruth B. Kundsins, Morrow (1974), 256 pp., \$7.95.

† *Times to Remember*, by Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, Doubleday (1974), 536 pp., \$12.50.

forced this tendency, strengthening its links with church, good health, public responsibility, family loyalty.

The early days are a bit blurred, perhaps inevitably in memoirs of an eighty-four-year-old woman, but the whole story is fascinating nevertheless. She was obviously gifted as an executive, master organizer, strategist. She remembered everything, saw to everything, kept the famous card file on the children's illnesses, promulgated the rules about the school clothing, the bathing caps all of one color so no one would get lost, the dentists, doctors, tennis lessons, dancing lessons, religious training, responsibilities, rewards, and opportunities. It was a formidable job, complicated by her husband's absences and by rather frequent moves, but obviously eased by the availability of money and servants. (One of the children's teachers observed in the early days that whenever Rose had a new baby she hired another servant and then went on a trip!) She spoke several languages, which came in handy during campaigns in ethnic neighborhoods, she was gracious, charming, punctual, equal to anything and anybody, able to meet Emperor Haile Selassie and discover that they almost shared a birthday, to chat about children with Dowager Queen Mary of England, to go to Paris, Vienna, Russia, South America, anywhere, and always to be photographed with her marvelous smile, her Dior dresses, her wonderful figure, never to be faulted in any way. She could have run General Motors or ITT, she could have been President, Queen, Empress, or Pope.

Edited as the memoirs are—unrevealing, discreet, circumspect, and everything else—still, quite a lot comes through. There is, for instance, the Mayor's daughter, the Princess of Boston, always with her father, taking the mother's place as hostess and companion, and yet secretly determining to meet and marry Joe Kennedy, no matter what the opposition, even eluding surveillance by hiding with him in a Christian Science church! (Joe referred to his Fitzgerald relatives as "an S.O.B. of a family," although Rose says nothing about that.) There is Rose swimming every day, going off on trips, walking, golfing, never participating in any of the competitive group sports so essential to the Kennedy family. Later she would make her annual or semi-annual trips to Paris for the collections, she would go to places like Maine Chance or The Greenhouse.

Rose's piety is so obviously one of the most individual things about her that a grandchild has audaciously doubted whether she even takes her priest into her entire confidence. It is known to all that she goes to early morning mass *every* morning no matter where she is, and that in troubled times she stays for the next mass. Clearly she is not without a personal life, even one of great inwardness and individuality, this woman who says the Rosary at all times, in happiness

and grief, on a plane, pacing the floor, at the hairdresser's, a woman who ponders frequently on Cardinal Newman's meditations, who lives in daily intimacy with the Stations of the Cross. Although some specially cherished persons close to her may receive letters subscribed E.D.M. ("Enfant de Marie," for the sodality to which she pledged herself in girlhood), this piety is not accessible to public view, and is not even like the private revelations of public persons, or like unconscious revelations; its personal stamp is subsumed in a traditional manner of action and expression. Quite possibly this kind of religious life was the form that individuality took in the past, providing for our ancestors, and still for some of our contemporaries, a whole limitless field of spiritual achievements not readily trimmed to the boundaries to be discerned in the hypotheses about women and success.

Rose Kennedy, with her ten children and the husband she termed "the architect of our lives," may provide an image distinctly unpleasing to radical feminists, but in no conceivable sense has she been a self-sacrificing mother, a martyr, or even a noble patient soul devoted only to her family. There is no disrespect in noting that, although she has become a Mother of Sorrows, by the evidence of her own memoirs, she has not lived for others, although Tolstoy said living for others was the only true happiness. (Thus she makes a curious remark when finding herself the mother of both the President and the Attorney General; it is an odd but revealing nuance: not the pride and pleasure that her children had reached such peaks but that *she* was the mother. On another occasion she speaks of the President *she and Joe* gave to the nation!)

Her children have often spoken of the training, the values and traits inculcated, the standards of behavior maintained in the Kennedy family—indeed, much of the book consists of such testimony from her surviving children and those they married, such as Ethel Kennedy and Jacqueline Onassis—and there is no doubt that she made a difference in their lives, and in the lives of countless others whose lives she has touched. It is an extremely powerful personal success she has always sought and reached, but it is not a success which can be comprehended within the terms of the new feminist ideology of achievement.

HISTORY provides abundant examples of other women whose greatest gift was in redeeming, inspiring, liberating, and nurturing the gifts of others—Nadezhda Mandelstam is a compelling recent example—and it is not without interest that such renunciation of self is often condemned almost as strenuously as immersion in family and domesticity. A recent book about the Von Richthofen sisters provides an excellent consideration of this devotion as another

kind of women's achievement.* The sisters of the title are Frieda, famous for her relationship with D. H. Lawrence, and Else, less widely known for her relationship with Alfred Weber, the philosopher and sociologist of culture, but only very discreetly known as the great love of Max Weber, the more famous brother and sociologist. The two sisters lived in the midst of intricate and powerful movements of thought, action, art, and political life, of major philosophical and ethical battles, of profoundly new social forms, and not only was this all in the air around them, it was, also, the content of their lives; they acted as well as witnessed. As the author observes, "Each was a face that launched a thousand ships." The movements in question are nothing less than ideas of patriarchal and matriarchal cultures, the world of men and the world of women, Apollonian and Dionysian modes of meaning and feeling, Bismarckian and liberal modes of politics, Prussian and Bavarian and Badenian styles of life, bourgeois and bohemian, militarism and socialism, Surrealism, Expressionism, resistance, reform, and revolution, *Lebensphilosophie*, and enlightened morality, Heidelberg and Berlin and Munich, vocation and duty and creativity. It is the author's contention that these two sisters, placed as they were at the crucial intersections of these enormous forces of culture, were in a peculiar position to influence profoundly the course of majestic struggles and the results of monumental encounters. It is in the work of D. H. Lawrence and of Max Weber that he places the seats of, as it were, rival empires of thought, feeling, and action, and by unraveling from each a gigantic and complex network of late 19th-century and early 20th-century ideas, he puts the two sisters at the center of the drama of culture in our time.

They are conjured up by means of contrasts, analogies, and correspondences. The sisters were born in the 1870's, their youth touched by the new thought of the time, particularly the complex of ideas and impulses known as the erotic movement, an earlier version of liberation and self-realization. Both sisters came under the spell of Otto Gross, an early psychoanalyst, anarchist, and Alcibiades of sexual rebellion rather like an earlier Wilhelm Reich. Else von Richthofen bore one of his children; Frieda was enthralled by him, and when she left England with Lawrence she sent her husband her carefully preserved letters from Otto Gross, as if in explanation of her escape from bondage. Through Gross, the sisters were in touch with Schwabing, the bohemian world, with all its stirrings of liberation, Marxism (Lenin lived in Schwabing for a while), existentialism, Germanic destiny and mythology, sexual freedom, *Mutterrecht*, and the rest, where the paths of genius and criminal crossed, and artist

and addict, philosopher and revolutionary. The Schwabing experience was what Else was *not* seeking when she cast her lot with Heidelberg, the center of reform and enlightenment, but both sisters made their choices in opposition to Berlin and Prussian militarism and power. The drama of patriarchy and matriarchy was to be acted out on this stage, with Else linked to the world of men with one of the first doctorates for women at Heidelberg and her job as a factory inspector, and Frieda representing Woman and *Magna Mater*, implicitly rejecting the world of Heidelberg. Parallel biographies of Lawrence and Max Weber reinforce the contrast, and so do the clusters of friends, associates, political works, novels, and disciples on both sides: Lawrence leads to F. R. Leavis as Weber leads to Talcott Parsons, through John Middleton Murry for the one and Karl Jaspers for the other; around Frieda were ranged Alma Mahler, the composer's widow (who herself became *Magna Mater* for Kokoschka, Franz Werfel, and others), Duse, Emma Goldman, Lou Andreas-Salome, and Rilke, while Isadora Duncan provided the theatrical version of it and Mabel Dodge Luhan the comic subplot. Clustered around Else as Athena can be found Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, Beatrice Webb, Dorothea and Friedrich Schlegel; here, Beatrice Webb is the poster version of Else, as Isadora Duncan was the poster version of Frieda.

A PART FROM intrinsic interest, the reason for spinning out these analogies about Munich and Heidelberg and Berlin is that the whole history is all to be regarded as Frieda's intellectual dowry and a justification of that womanly type, in herself and in relation to a man. Then, it is to be a vindication of Lawrence as a novelist and, as against Max Weber, an exalting of Lawrence as the preeminent creative thinker of our time who touched all there was to touch, who saw all there was—and still is—to see. The argument about Frieda's importance for Lawrence has been made before, but the new documentation is illuminating and persuasive. Lawrence made extensive and detailed use of Frieda's own story, her family's story, the whole von Richthofen milieu—its ideas and emotional tendencies, the possibilities implicit in the ideas (Frieda often asserted that "he got it all from me"), and Green even goes so far as to suggest that the novels written without Frieda's influence, like *The Trespassers*, *The White Peacock*, or later *Aaron's Rod*, were less good and important than those in which she was an inspiration or almost a collaborator, like *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Clearly the biographer is much more interested in Frieda than in Else—he had interviews with them both, with Frieda in 1955, the year before she died, when she still had her husky glamorous voice, her animation, her appealing intensity, still at seventy-six.

* *The von Richthofen Sisters: The Triumphant and the Tragic Modes of Love*, by Martin Green, Basic Books (1974), 396 pp., \$12.50.

Else he met much later, in 1971, when she was ninety-seven, but she too was still powerful in *her* way, ironic, knowing, challenging, discreet, imperial, and majestic. Frieda is presented as the triumphant one, living out her life as Woman, representing the supreme accomplishment of power, of sexuality and self-fulfillment. Else, in contrast, was more Athena than Demeter; Heidelberg and both Max Weber and Alfred Weber (to whom she devoted herself as a brilliant handmaiden rather than a *Magna Mater*) represent the more tragic accomplishment embodying a denial of Eros and a sacrificial power. According to the theory, Franz Werfel should have been greater than he was, and Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus, should not have been great at all: one had the rival *Magna Mater* Alma Mahler for himself and the other parted from her early in their marriage. Would Frieda have made the difference in Max Weber's work? Would Else, if he had possessed her and not renounced Eros as he did? And would it have made the difference? Whatever the answers to such questions might be, it is clear that neither Else nor Frieda can be understood in terms of the impoverished psychology of achievement so widely accepted nowadays.

HALF a generation earlier than the von Richthofen girls, and in America, Jane Addams could discern none of the alternatives that confronted them.* Instead of the erotic movement and self-realization, instead of revolution or Marxism or the other possibilities, the girl born in northern Illinois in 1860 saw the genteel tradition and the claims of the family, or missionary work, or teaching, and it was her own discovery of social work that provided her vocabulary of self-realization. Then too she was more attached to her father than the German girls, and her father was a more powerful and original person, far more enterprising and able than the synthetically masculine and rather shiftless Baron von Richthofen. The young women of America were very attached to their fathers: when Henry Adams's wife committed suicide in 1885, it was not unrelated to her father's recent death, and the similar if less tragic attachments of Margaret Fuller, Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton to their fathers were mirrored in the fiction of the period. Jane Addams's father introduced her to history, piety, intelligence, good works, and to the image of greatness. His death, which coincided with her graduation from college, left her without her bearings for eight years while she searched for a satisfactory image of herself and her life in the future. Not until she renounced what she called "the family claim," and became in a sense the daughter of all Chicago itself, could she make a life for herself in Hull House, which,

she says, she furnished with family mahogany and family silver as proudly as any young matron.

The founding of Hull House and the beginning of the settlement-house movement is not Jane Addams's achievement alone, but of course she represents the best of it, as she for years represented the best of American womanhood. Later she would be compared with Mrs. Roosevelt, and she was always to be found supporting noble causes with noble sentiments. She was a pacifist in the First World War, she lent her voice to the movement for women's suffrage, she spoke and wrote of the evils of prostitution, the importance of the labor movement, the need for enlightened responsible government, the reclamation of the poor, the downtrodden, the troubled masses who were free only to starve or be exploited. She opened the doors of Hull House to all the neighborhood, and invited the striking workers into the parlor. If we don't quite see her climbing the stairs of a tenement, like Lillian Wald, or wiping children's noses or delivering immigrant babies (although she did), she nevertheless comes across to us very vividly presiding at the dinner table at Hull House, making speeches about the need for reform, or persuading powerful and rich industrialists and benefactors to take seriously the predicament of the poor—Lady Bountiful in the best and most effective manifestation. Earlier, in a college essay, Jane Addams had called it the role of the bread-giver, which she saw as the noblest role for women; later she generalized that idea to the public sphere and spoke of municipal housekeeping, and the need for women to bring to public life their special talents and wisdom. She had endless patience, was the great conciliator, whether the warring parties were labor and industry in the Pullman strike of 1896 or Colonel House and the pacifists. She became the American Saint, with her large sad eyes, her gray hair in a bun, her velvet dress and amber beads, and her apparently marvelous voice which resounded through the halls of Hull House so beautifully that even on the top floor it would be heard in all its magic and power.

Fear of failure does not seem to have been what troubled Jane Addams during her earlier years, nor fear of success in her maturity. The period before the founding of Hull House, when she traveled through Europe, lived the life of the daughter, submitted to Dr. Weir Mitchell's torturous "cure," and all the while searched herself and her world for a life's work in which she could realize her powers—that period does not yield its meaning readily. Jane Addams's writing is not altogether clear about it, and of course the crisis of religious faith which accompanied it provides a special vocabulary. She seems to have wanted quite desperately to gain some pleasure from doing good; pleasure was not a goal in itself nor were good works or evangelism. She was interested in Tolstoy's example, and after visiting him in

* *American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams*, by Allen F. Davis, Oxford University Press (1973), 339 pp., \$10.95.

Russia, she was profoundly moved. She, however, lived in the slums not to become one of the huddled masses, like Tolstoy among the peasants, but to bring the masses to the mahogany table.

There was no thought of Jane Addams's ceasing to be the heiress she was: only as a lady and saint could she confront the powerful and rich and demand money from them for Hull House when they had not previously demonstrated their eagerness to assist the poor. There is an interesting story about Jane Addams on her visit to Tolstoy in 1896 wearing, in the fashion of the day, those huge puffed-out leg-of-mutton sleeves; Tolstoy, in his peasant's shirt, fingered the material of her sleeve and severely noted that there was enough to make a child's dress and did she not feel such a dress was a barrier between her and the people? Jane Addams, to her credit, admits to having been disconcerted and embarrassed; then she gave a very American defense: that her sleeves were nothing compared to those of the Chicago working girl, and that there was no way to choose a peasant's garb from among the thirty-six nationalities served by Hull House! Considering the subsequent fate of Tolstoy's ideas in Russia and the subsequent history and effect of the settlement house in American life, it is not at all clear which one of the two should have been the more embarrassed and disconcerted.

Jane Addams believed that guilt should be conquered for the good of others, just as the pleasure of the fortunate could be generated and even satisfied by meeting the needs of the wretched. It touched on Christian Socialism, it was the social gospel in action, but it was also a moral equivalent for those nervous collapses of educated young people in the later 19th century. In delineating the "Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements," Jane Addams made a striking observation of the meaning of living for others. And indeed anyone who has ever worked in a settlement house or in some similar project of social betterment can testify to the purity of spirit and the dynamics of motivation which are involved. It points to a very different possibility for the self, one that would transcend both fear of failure and fear of success by forgetfulness of self.

JANE ADDAMS did not marry, and, after a brief conflict over an attachment to her step-brother following her father's death, she seems to have renounced romantic interests in order to become *the* American heroine, as her biography's title suggests, and to devote herself to being daughter and wife to the public, to the poor, to those in need of care, support, conciliation. In the 19th-century fashion, she had many close friendships with women, in a web of sisterly fellowship which is difficult for us nowadays to appreciate precisely as they did. Half the early generations of American college women did not marry and dedicated themselves in a similar

fashion. The erotic movement had not yet supplanted the genteel tradition. It is only when we come to the next generation, and the next, that the coordinate emotional impulses toward self-fulfillment joined the wish to have a career beyond the family. Helene Deutsch, the psychoanalyst, is a good case in point.

In the story which she chooses to tell of her own life,* a kind of unspecific, romantic ambition was the most striking experience of her youth, linked with an intense affection for her father (again!) and an explicit antagonism toward her mother. The circumstances of her birth—a Polish town in 1884, the well-to-do family of a Jewish lawyer—colored this emotional disposition in such a way that the young Hala grew up as her father's favorite in a world favorable for herself personally but menaced by cruel forces close at hand. As a young person, Hala despised and fought her mother, adored and pleased her father. The objective restrictions on the lives of women, and of Jews in this Gentile milieu, were reinforced emotionally in her in a most intricate way: her mother, it seems clear, represented the restrictions and prohibitions, and her father the encouraging and liberating aspects of the larger world, contrary to certain assumptions prevalent nowadays about role models, stereotypes, and internalization of norms. It was the mother who frowned upon the young woman's determination to pass her *Abitur*, that academic guarantee of admission to university. It was perhaps her own disappointment with her father's capacity to liberate her that attracted her to a passionate socialist activism and an affair with "L.," the leading Socialist of the town, and it was her passion for him, joined with the wish to escape the isolated constricting atmosphere for a larger life of possibility, that led her to study medicine and dedicate herself to revolution, uniting ideology and passion.

Helene Deutsch observes that "the whole course of my liberation was beset with difficulties" and she recounts now, from the vantage point of ninety, what the young Polish medical student did to free herself from mother, from father, from the bourgeoisie, from her Socialist lover, and from Poland itself. She went to Vienna in 1907, and in 1911 she left Vienna for Munich, where she began her psychiatric studies under Kraepelin and later met Felix Deutsch; she never lived in Poland thereafter, maintaining warm but distant relations with her father, and never really reconciled with her mother. Her next liberation was her "release from the chains of the unconscious through psychoanalysis." She names her three liberators as her father, L., and Freud. (Her husband and son were not part of this drama.) She became Freud's assistant and disciple, one of the foremost women analysts in those pioneering days, the first direc-

* *Confrontations with Myself: An Epilogue*, by Helene Deutsch, Norton (1973), 217 pp., \$6.95.

tor of the Vienna Training Institute, later emigrating to America, an important figure in the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute, and a major writer on the psychology of women. These "confrontations" with herself in the twilight of her life are naturally colored by her fundamentally psychological point of view. Nothing could have been further from the young Hala Rosenbach than the fear of failure nor, apparently, the fear of success that Dr. Horner adumbrates. Perhaps, like Jane Addams and Marie Curie and Martha Graham, she was engaged in an activity that had few precedents and therefore few pressures—the number of women in the universities and in medical schools was minute when the young Polish rebel took her *Abitur*, as were the numbers of settlement houses or women physicists or modern dancers. Although Helene Deutsch's first ambition had been to study law, like her father and L., the law schools did not then admit women. Professional training was a means of living out her passion and her liberated dedication, however, so the obstacles to studying law simply pointed her in another direction. Later, in the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, and in all those complicated relationships, she often encountered competition, difficulty, jealousy, and other emotions which were resolutely analyzed and expressed with the candor typical of that milieu. "I didn't have an easy time at the start of my career in the Society," she observes. But nothing in her description of herself as a student or later as a young woman in training analysis suggests the kind of despair and uncertainty and anticipation of difficulty that has been so widely mentioned in recent discussions of women's accomplishment.

THE daughterly relation in which Helene Deutsch stood to Freud, and her total and enduring dedication to him throughout her professional life, when he never ceased to be the "center" of her "intellectual sphere," was an important source of self-definition for her, especially when it was balanced by the deep attachment to her husband (Felix Deutsch was also a doctor) and her son. Freud's ideas have always had for her, she says, "the character of a categorical imperative." Totally absorbed in analytic work and in her warm close relationship with Freud and in the furtherance of his ideas, she preserved what she calls a "naiveté" about the politics of the international psychoanalytic movement and the various sharp doctrinal and methodological controversies which exploded in it. Her complete adherence to Freud's ideas never wavered, which may account for the somewhat acerbic tone of her remarks about some of those whose allegiances were modified. Among our contemporaries, Helene Deutsch is not usually acclaimed for this lifelong devotion which seems like idolatry, and by some in fact she is referred to as a highly orthodox or "reactionary" source of ideas about the psy-

chology of women, which betrays a distorted and mistaken understanding of her ideas. This extremely personal book, written at the end of her life, although not providing *revelations*, is nevertheless extremely interesting in its implications for our understanding of the accomplishments of women. She speaks of her example as a "pioneer" in the little town of Przemyśl, and how her action awakened in the other girls "the feeling that they could be free if they had the inner courage to revolt," and she goes on to say:

How strange this must sound today, when young women have become liberated to such a degree! At that time we as girls had to struggle and sacrifice to achieve what is now taken for granted. The embattled gates to equal rights have indeed opened up for modern women, but I sometimes think to myself: "That is not what I meant by freedom—it is only 'social progress.'"

There is no doubt that the energy of her rebellion, her passion for independence, and her desire to be part of great events combined with passionate attachments at each stage of her life, thus giving the urge to achievement a strong basis in personal energy. Even the brief sections of self-analysis point to the possibility that in the contemporary instances of inward uncertainty and psychological barriers to success, a sufficiently complex understanding of the conflicts has not been developed, just as the schema of personal identifications is often not adequate to explain anything, nor are the accepted ideas about sex-stereotypes and role models.

Clearly, for a young woman passionately rebellious in several complex ways, the very difficulty of pursuing her career, the opposition, the university restrictions, the customs of medical training, provided a challenge to succeed, but it is a question, given the personal history, whether she would have succeeded without the specifically liberating sponsors life provided in the form of father, lover, and master. Later, when she became a mother, there were ordinary problems of domestic management and the division of energies, and she seems to have had an extremely kind and supportive husband in Felix Deutsch. It is worth noting that she did not marry the father-lover-master—her husband seems to have been quite a different type—and that the small world of psychoanalysis was a kind of family for her in which she played the part of favorite daughter (notwithstanding that the *real* favorite daughter, Anna Freud, also an analyst, was someone with whom she identified very closely). Apart from the analogies and mythological roles, Helene Deutsch was extremely gifted, and still is, and her "confrontations" represent a remarkable creative re-seeing of herself as well as an exercise in disentangling the identifications of her emotional life. She speaks, of course, of her father, but is not unaware that the great devotion and attachment contained an aspect of ambivalence buried under that great

love, and we can see the important role of that ambivalence in the whole course of Helene Deutsch's achievement. And then the opening pages on her birthplace, that little town of Przemyśl where, as she says, she really didn't spend so much time in relation to the rest of her ninety years, but which remains for her still the center of the earth. To this day she remembers every smallest corner of the *Schlossberg*, the park built over the ruins, and the house with the large courtyard and the three floors around it, on the *Ringplatz*. This was the house and the town from which she freed herself to take part in the great events of the world, and yet it has represented for all of her life the lost paradise of childhood.

THE example of Margaret Mead* complicates the matter still further, for here is a woman in her seventies whose allegiances and identifications are even more intricate than the earlier American or European types and yet display none of the adolescent turmoil of young Helene Deutsch nor the noble renunciations of Jane Addams. She was born in 1901, her young womanhood coincided with the 20's and 30's; her birth as a first and wanted child, her parents and her encouraging grandmother, her sisters and brother, all shone beneficently upon her. Everything in her life seems to have been for the best, everything turned into a virtue, despite difficulties along the way, and she comes close to asserting that all discord was order misunderstood, all partial evil universal good. There is a certain falsity of tone in this autobiography, with its homey title and the image of hoarfrost on the berries denoting a rich harvest, the good old-timey America, the insistence in the opening pages that although she lives nowhere, she is capable of making herself at home anywhere in the world—home becomes wherever she is, in a Tchambuli village or on the top floor of the American Museum of Natural History. The homey image is pursued, deliberately, because she knows very well that she comes into everyone's living room unbidden, on TV, sitting in her pants suits with her Dutch-boy haircut, providing poulitices and nostrums, ready to talk about blacks, marriage, women, politics, peace, or any other matter: self-styled grandmother to the world. And so one looks for the more personal, more urgent, more angry self, even if transcended, one looks for the difficulties in her life, and they seem absent although she says there were some. All is as smooth as a national saga, and she joins Jane Addams and Mrs. Kennedy in the presentation of a public persona.

It was always assumed that Margaret would go to college, would be a competent woman, like her mother and grandmother and other female rela-

tives, would cope with life in an intelligent, clear-eyed manner. And so she did. Everything was sensible and reinforced by determination: her studies, her engagement, her young marriage, her interest in anthropology. Ruth Benedict and Franz Boaz encouraged and sponsored her, her husband cooperated, the Samoan project succeeded, the first marriage was dissolved when she met Reo Fortune on the boat back to Europe, but Mundugumor and Arapesh and the wish to be a mother eroded that justification, and a new marriage and new work relationship with Gregory Bateson presented itself, and after her "lifetime of work" on children and adolescents, after many miscarriages and disappointments, she had her own child. And that too was managed sensibly, lovingly, with competence. The field work was arduous, often dull, as with the Arapesh when she found herself bored by the thinness of the culture, and there were physical hardships and dangers, as well as personal and intellectual problems. Still, a reader may feel that all her vivid grasp of those primitive cultures, her remarkable endurance, her imaginative explorations hardly belong to the excessively self-vindicating, self-justifying person she offers to the reader. Some other person must have had those gifts and done those things, not the person here.

No more than Helene Deutsch is Margaret Mead a naive observer of her life and self. She herself has contributed to the contemporary awareness of the effects of childhood on adult life which she uses to explain herself to the reader; it was her data on the young Samoans which confirmed a new view of adolescence in our own society; and she is intimately bound up with all sorts of modern feelings about infantile sexuality, sex roles, feminine and masculine as against male and female, and all the rest. She writes as if all this serenity and confidence and competence were with her from birth, without indicating how any of it emerged in life experiences. When she speaks of her own feelings of always being comfortable with her own sexual identity, linking it with her enduring assumption that she would be a mother, and then with her own assured and amazed new life as the triumphant grandmother, the reader may feel that she is insisting too much on a point which is the crux of a modern dispute. She knows all that has been said on the matter and so her management of the question seems extremely *political*, almost like Rose Kennedy's, and just as polished and retouched. The remark of Harriet Beecher Stowe's about not having been able to write a novel about slavery "because the baby cried so much" prompts this universal grandmother to assert—with her eye on radical feminism, no doubt—that what Mrs. Stowe should have said was "because the baby smiled so much"! She believes she is herself a deviant from the accepted pattern of the career woman or working woman intellectual and attempts to resolve that disjunc-

* *Blackberry Winter: My Earlier Years*, by Margaret Mead, Touchstone/Simon & Schuster (1972), 305 pp., \$2.95. See also Sheila K. Johnson, "A Look at Margaret Mead," in the March 1973 COMMENTARY.

tion with an appeal to the Americanness of her womanly competence. This attitude belonged to her from the beginning, as when she realized early that

I neither wanted to do bad work in order to make myself attractive to boys nor did I want them to dislike me for doing good work. . . . This preference foreshadowed, I suppose, my anthropological field choices—not to compete with men in male fields, but instead to concentrate on the kinds of work that are better done by women.

It is the competent older sister speaking, and the issue does not seem to have troubled her, although the reader is forced to say "seem" because most of the ambivalences have been defused. In the same way she reports in passing on her parents' incompatibility, her mother's lifelong annoyance at the grandmother's living with them, even, like the good anthropological field worker that she is, reporting on her first menstruation at eleven, when her mother's resentment of this sexual process came through the carefully elevated tone in which it was explained—these dissonant chords are not resolved, nor even really heard.

FEAR of failure? fear of success? psychological barriers to success? Such concepts seem entirely inadequate for understanding the lives of many of these women, or, even more important, for making sense of the contemporary situation. Before any weight could be given to the presence or absence of fear-of-success imagery in the diagnostic tests of the Horner study, surely one should know who is producing such imagery and what other psychological material is associated with it, what life situations are offering challenges to success and failure. Surely there could be further examination of all the easy assumptions about sex roles and sex stereotypes and the manner in which these are inculcated. Nowhere is there any place for the competence and evidently successful encounter with disintegrating forces that the lives of Margaret Mead or Jane Addams or others exhibit. It becomes increasingly clear that the identifications so familiarly adduced to explain things are enormously complex, are not consciously and deliberately developed, are perhaps not even subject to the kind of intervention and manipulation which we think they are.

In the examples of Martha Graham and Marie Curie, once again the simple schema of current ideology fails to illuminate. Martha Graham's intense devotion to art, and her remarkable career of the past fifty years, exhibit not the imperious demand of a personal achievement, although it is that, but a subordination of self to the necessities of art. In the service of her art, Graham could be cruel, selfish, imperial, and imperious; she was known to succumb to rages, to pull a tablecloth and all the dishes off a table in her anger, and she was known also for contrite apology, for humble

and warm gestures. Anyone who was close to the milieu of the Graham classes and dance group sensed the transcendent nature of the vocation of this great dancer and the comparable vocation she inspired in her pupils: the rigor of their training, the purity of their concentration and sacrifice had the character of a supreme novitiate, but in neither the pupils nor in their powerful mistress was this a narcissistic exercise, it was rather a thoroughly coherent spiritual preparation for a mission of great objective seriousness. Overtones of religiosity in the apprenticeship were not accidental.

Marie Curie's dedication to science had something of the same submission to a goal of inexorable grandeur and power. Although early subjected to her mother's Catholic piety, the young woman transferred her faith to science and learning, tinged by the romantic Polish patriotism of the time. Appropriately, she named her first great discovery polonium, although she had by then given up the thought of returning to Poland. Like Helene Deutsch a generation later, she united her romantic and intellectual interests in her marriage, and indeed the work-marriage of the Curies was in almost every respect what Margaret Mead would have wished for in anthropological field-work. Pierre Curie was always scrupulously careful to insist on his wife's independence and to credit her accordingly. She, for her part, worked indefatigably and with that marvelous endurance of the Slavic woman for what had to be done, no matter how arduous and painful. Both of them suffered rather severe radium burns and it was probable that her last illness and death were directly related to long years of dangerous exposure to radiation. (Her daughter Irene and her husband Frédéric Joliot-Curie, both scientists and Nobel Prize winners, also were victims of the effects of radiation.) The story of Marie Curie, even popularized and vulgarized as it became, still commands our interest, and the recent skillful biography of her may serve to renew that interest.

Once again, we find that although the patterns of identification are not entirely clear—both the Sklodowskys were science teachers, it was understood that their children would train for similar work—and the whole network of sex-role stereotypes could certainly be faulted from the standpoint of radical feminism, the kinds of uncertainty and anxiety so widely spoken of today do not seem to have played an important part in the life of the young Maria Sklodowska. Discouragement and penury, even boredom while she was exiled to the country as a governess, concern about the adequacy of learning chemistry from books without the opportunity to perform experiments, sacrifice of her own ambitions to help support a sister—all were there, but apparently not the kind of psychological barriers to success that recent investigators discuss. Her biographer suggests that as a woman scientist she was liberated by this very dedication,

impersonal and complete, to objective abstract science, and that her independence, like her privacy, screened her feelings from those around her. It seems important to note, too, that although from this vantage point we see her as the discoverer of radium, twice a Nobel Prize winner, and a crucial figure in the development of new knowledge of the atom, she was not especially "successful" until long after her major work was done. She failed to be elected to the Académie des Sciences (defeated by the "father of T.S.F.") in 1911; Pierre Curie had failed in his first attempt in 1902, and had been elected only very narrowly in 1905; throughout his entire career, he never achieved an academic position equal to his scientific contribution, even after the Davy Prize and the Nobel Prize, and was repeatedly denied the professorships he so clearly deserved. Although Marie Curie herself was a major figure in the international community of scientists, in 1906, when she succeeded to the university post her husband had held for only a year and a half before his fatal accident, she was the first woman to reach professorial rank. During the years they worked together, they each published many scientific papers, and enjoyed the personal and professional regard of those few scientific colleagues working in their field, but success in the worldly sense did not come to them, and, in fact, by their disinterested scientific beliefs they deliberately alienated themselves from rewards and perquisites. It is a curious detail that on that day in 1906 when Marie Curie gave her inaugural lecture at the Sorbonne, one of the personages in the audience listening to the remarks on the structure of matter was the Comtesse de Greffuhle, Proust's great friend and the probable model for the Duchesse de Guermantes. Marie Curie was probably wearing one of her two or three black dresses, the only ones she owned, because they wouldn't soil in the laboratory. She was thirty-six and had lived her life for positivism, science, pure research, work, and truth. Undoubtedly she had only black shoes, so did not have to think about changing from the red ones.

Clearly, then, there is too simplistic an idea of success in all the talk about women and achievement. There are surely lives which display very few of the signs of success until very late, or after life is over. There are lives of great significance which go unrecognized by peers for a very long time, there are those who achieve nothing for themselves but leave a legacy for others who come after, there are lives sacrificed for causes.

In this connection we may be reminded of someone like Hannah Senesh, the young Hungarian martyr of twenty-three who was executed in 1944 just before the fall of Budapest. This charming and gifted young woman, with strong literary interests, a passionate desire for adven-

ture, sweet and generous in nature, recalls to us something of the young Helene Deutsch's romantic, spirited encounter with life and intellect, although Hannah was very warmly attached to her mother, and there was no father to encourage or inspire her. At the age of eighteen she emigrated alone to Palestine to become a farm worker and eventually to join a kibbutz and become part of The Land. Nothing in her life until then would have prepared the observer for this choice: her father had been a writer, the family led an assimilated life among intellectuals and theatrical people, Hannah's brother was studying in France, and there was every expectation that she would lead a life of great personal interest and cultural achievement. She was a lively, charming, animated young woman who kept a diary,* longed for romance and great challenges, wanted to be a writer. At any other time all of it would have come true, but Jews in Hungary in the 30's gasped as the air became poisoned with anti-Semitism and the Nazi noose tightened. Even within the limits of her own schoolgirl life, ominous signs of the future could be perceived, when in 1937 her election as secretary to the school Literary Society was nullified because a Jewish girl could not be allowed to hold that office. Hannah became a Zionist, learned Hebrew, and began to feel that only in Palestine could Jews live in freedom. She left in 1939 for the Nahalal Agricultural School, hoping her mother and brother would join her in a few months, and with her mother's blessing, although not her genuine agreement to what seemed a rash and even wasteful plan. Hannah refused to go to Palestine as a writer, or intellectual, or even as a Hungarian: she was determined to become part of the new society as a new person.

During the first years of the war, Hannah was immersed in her new learning, and in her new identity, but she felt increasingly isolated even as she remained convinced of her choice, and of the possibility of contributing something to The Land. As the news from Europe became more horrible, those in Palestine began to feel a certain guilt over their relative safety, and, more, a concern for those Jews who were unable to leave. Hannah felt this especially, as she worried about her mother. The life in Palestine was extremely rewarding, but she had long felt that she had been marked out for a mission. Suddenly, it became clear to her early in 1943, that she must go to Hungary and rescue her mother and help the Jewish community still there. Just at that time, the British were organizing secret parachute missions to attempt to save Allied airmen downed behind the Nazi lines, and a number of young Palestinians were recruited, with the understanding that they could rescue their fellow Jews in Europe once they secured the safety of the Allied

* *Hannah Senesh: Her Life and Diary*, Introduction by Abba Eban, Schocken (1973), 257 pp., \$2.75.

pilots. Hannah of course volunteered for this mission and left her kibbutz in Caesarea to begin training as a parachutist. Of the thirty-two sent in March 1944, seven fell into the hands of the Nazis in June, and one of the seven was Hannah. She spent the next five months in various prisons, tortured, brutalized, and separated from her comrades. Miraculously, some of them were reunited in prison. As part of the torture, Hannah was confronted with her mother, to whom she cried, "Forgive me, Mother, I had to do what I did." During the months of her imprisonment, she apparently led a life of saintly example, comforting her fellow prisoners, developing a system of signaling her mother across the courtyard, teaching the children, inventing and improvising in the classic manner of ingenious prisoners, maintaining her sweet transcendent spirit, and resisting the physical and psychological torture inflicted on her by the Gestapo and by her Hungarian jailers. At her trial, in late October, she bravely defended herself before her judges, like Joan of Arc, it is said, and because the Americans were bombing the city and the Russians were not far off, the judges did not pass any sentence at all, but instead fled the country. Ten days later she was executed.

Hannah had dreamed of being a heroine, one of her fellow parachutists said, and she *was* a heroine. She was apparently also extremely stubborn, determined, dauntless, and brave. She was not cautious, she resisted the discipline of the

group, she was not cooperative. There is much that could be said of her final months, psychologically, and even critically. Her mission was not successful, millions of Hungarian Jews were not saved, although her mother survived. The story is sobering, both as it is told in her diary and letters, and the accounts of her last months, and in the larger perspective of the fate of the Hungarian Rescue Committee and the activities of Brand and Kastner in the demonic bargaining with Eichmann for the lives of Hungarian Jews.* Hannah has become a heroine for Israel, her martyrdom expressing a complex message concerning the relation of Israel to the Jews of the Diaspora, and of course the Holocaust itself. Those who may not be linked intimately in this relation to Israel or to the Holocaust nevertheless share for all time in the meaning of martyrdom, and in that last poem of hers, written in May 1944 just before her fateful capture:

Blessed is the match consumed
in kindling flame.
Blessed is the flame that burns
in the secret fastness of the heart.
Blessed is the heart with strength to stop
its beating for honor's sake.
Blessed is the match consumed
in kindling flame.

* *The Summer That Bled: The Biography of Hannah Senesh*, by Anthony Masters, St. Martin's Press (1972), 349 pp., \$7.95.



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From Plato to Las Vegas

Jack Richardson

$$\sim(\exists x) x=x$$

I WROTE the above formula while I was a student of philosophy in Munich. My enthusiasm for my subject, which had at one time stirred in me a wish to distill and define the universe, was almost exhausted, and I was becoming, due to a spreading positivistic infection, a morbid enemy of speculative thought, determined that if I could not slip past my own refutations into glory, no one else would.

$\sim(\exists x) x=x$, however, filled me with a demented sense of possibility. The formula seemed at the moment of its conception to be a legitimate way of describing Nothing, Nullity, Nothingness, or any of the other theatrical concepts of total absence of matter and spirit, human or divine. For translated into English, the symbols mean that there is no thing identical with itself, or, more bluntly, there are no things. I had therefore found a way to state, in the wry form of a logical proposition, an alternative to the ragged cluster of entities on which philosophy had wasted so much time.

This achievement was of consequence to me because, as betrayed as I felt I'd been by every philosopher who'd promised me proof that I and the world were more than dreams or accidents, I did not want to see philosophy demoted to the status of a historical curio, to be studied, like alchemy, only as an example of the mind's capacity for meticulous folly. Indeed, I'd come to Germany in the hope that I might salvage something usable from the old traditions of thought, that I might learn to trust again in sentences that offered more to the spirit than tidy syntax and humble verifications. Day after day, in seminars on aesthetics, phenomenology, epistemology, ethics, and metaphysics, I'd force myself to listen sympathetically to philosophy performed in high, idealistic German style, to nouns and verbs compounding themselves into monstrosities of language as they strained to become definitions that would unify thought and matter, time and space,

beauty and truth, and dozens more of those old dualities that once gave philosophy its best moments of intellectual tension. As generous as I tried to be toward these attempts to speak majestically about the world, I heard nothing that made me believe that there were truths larger than those expressed in sentences like "At a certain time and place it is probable that I perceived green." After a few months I gave up attending classes and began a private purge of those philosophers whose errors I considered the most dangerous to an honest state of mind.

I did not begin cautiously. The first to be banished was the aristocrat Plato, the philosopher who'd created the noblest vision of mind, matter, and soul of any thinker with a private income and a taste for worldly pleasure. However, he had founded this sublime view of things on a terrible error, namely, the belief that tautologies are evidence of the mind's endowment with natural inspiration. For anyone who's been fascinated by his own thoughts, this is indeed a seductive notion, for it offers leisurely enjoyment of one's own logic, of peaceful apprehension of truths that have no need of commerce with the low-bred disorders of the external world. However, in its isolation from the rough ambiguities of life's surfaces, all Plato's *nous* can do is make up new geometries or games for itself, and all it can commune with are minds born to share its premises. Faced with the question whether a man ought to be crucified for disturbing the peace or whether sex three times a day is morally good or bad, such minds are helpless, for they must find answers consistent with the axioms they have made up for the sake of a coherent world, but in those very axioms are the questions they wish to answer. Thus Plato's dialectic, so exalted in its Socratic personification, was nothing more than intelligence discovering over and over again its own hypothesis and then exalting in the impossible task of turning the hypothetical into reality. It had all made for marvelous talk, for exquisite demonstrations that a heaven of pure passion and ideal proportions is self-evident to those with a knack for philosophy. But it had all been done with tricks, with arithmetic gimmicks and logical mirrors that had dazzled me for a time, but that now seemed shoddy devices to make the world thinkable.

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But it was not easy to exile Plato, especially in Munich, during the last days of October, since this is when the city celebrates, with unashamed grossness, the existence of beer. My window looked out on the meadow where each of the local breweries had erected a mammoth tent in which, to the accompaniment of a brass band, the Münchener could drink the local product from foot-high steins decorated with slightly obscene *Sprichwörter* on the pleasures and problems of drink. The celebrants, groaning and muttering as they stumbled home, often converted the rich Bavarian brews into urine or vomit beneath my window, and I would watch them sadly, without any alternative to fall back on, my gaze gradually rising to the dark October sky from which I had chased all the exquisite absolutes that Plato had put there. I longed to glimpse, through sense or intuition, something finer than a Bavarian beer festival, and like Parmenides, I would have accepted mud, air, and excretion as readily as tree, star, and hummingbird. Anything that indicated purpose or progression beyond a life of *Oktoberfest* would have been acceptable if it improved the view from my window. But of course nothing appeared, and Plato gave way before a *lederhosen*'ed Hans Wurst who, in his human grossness, did not require a subtle logic to prove his existence.

Aristotle, with his categories, followed his mentor into exile, for he had been no less guilty of trimming the world to suit his philosophy. Some Cynics, Stoics, and Epicureans I allowed to linger, since they had generally not presumed to tell the truth about life, merely to state a few useful hints for getting through it. Church fathers and theologians who had played with ontological, causal, or teleological proofs of divinity received lay notices of eviction; those who had urged humility and faith, I kept in reserve in case it ever came to pass that the only course left open to me was that of exhausted conversion.

A FEW DAYS after the New Year came the hardest parting of all. I had truly admired Descartes: the range of his thought was impressively contained, the method of his inquiry a magnificently expanding spiral of taut induction. Even if he had fallen back on the idea of an undecitful god in order to verify the world's reality, it was a small indulgence that one allowed him in gratitude for his establishing the indubitableness of the ego, of the thinking subject that may doubt everything except the fact that it is indeed doubting. His *cogito ergo sum* had been much more to me than a philosophical catchword: it was, if one examined it with care and understanding, an exquisite monstrosity in which a radiant human Self was revealed. However, I had learned from the history of logic that what is not needed need not be. From Occam's Razor to Sheffer's Stroke, the principle of refinement and

reduction had been the duty of thought, and with sadness I admitted that "I think therefore I am," was just a dramatic way of saying that "There are thoughts." *Ergo*, there is no logical reason to believe that one's thoughts are one's own, any more than there is reason to believe that one's perceptions are glimpses of reality. Descartes's attempt to prove his existence had been gallant, but even in a world of clear and distinct ideas, he was, by his own logic, a superfluity.

Kant, the celebrant of synthetic *a priori* space and time, had given me a moment of hope that there might be some bit of noble immanence in the human mind. But I should have guessed from the beginning that anyone who resurrects the bureaucratic notion of categories, or who posits a *Ding-an-sich* whenever the phenomenal world gets out of hand, was not to be trusted. I realized that unlearned awareness of space and time was not a proof of intuitive knowledge but simply a primitive criterion for being alive. To say that one must be breathing in order to learn mathematics is to say enough to be severely condemned.

Just before Lent, after a mass trial of British empiricists, I renounced my last connection with formal philosophy. Mathematics, not as a science of information but as an exquisite form of intellectual play, had become my refuge from the traduccments of the senses. From the work of Cantor, Boole, Peano, Frege, and Russell, I had drawn the conclusion that there could at least be imagined constructions of thought that pretended to nothing except their own consistency and completeness. Worn out with looking for a workable nexus between mind and matter, I'd thought of counting myself among those about whom Poincaré said, "*La matière ne leur importe pas, la forme seule les intéresse.*" The forms in question were not those of Plato, a *ne plus ultra* chair or trapezoid floating in celestial ether and waiting patiently to be contemplated by the right philosopher. Rather, they were strategies of mind, elaborately postulated edifices that needed no earth-bound models or appeals to intuition for their proofs. They were complete, finished mosaics of intelligence that could not even be described by ordinary language, so magnificently useless was their aesthetic appeal. I became, therefore, metalingual, thinking and speaking inside inverted commas, and for a time, confident that this new source of delight was infinite in its resources, I had been a contented abstract thinker.

Then came Gödel's Proof, an infamous and arcane piece of brilliance that demonstrated that all axiomatic systems are incomplete, that they must be submitted to rules of inference whose consistency must always be in doubt. For a long time I resisted the grim truth contained among Gödel's definitions and lemmata, willfully refusing to understand the conclusions I knew they led to. All I now had left were a few algebraic geometries, and I had no intention of parting with

them easily, of admitting that there was no worthwhile mental enterprise that was above suspicion.

However, determined to end the purge without sentiment, I reluctantly sentenced the mathematicians to return, as they seemed ready to do, to Platonic Realism and there to waste infinite time in the search for ideal numbers. This last judgment came as the pre-Lenten holiday in Munich was ending, when the streets were filled with costumed revelers swaying and singing through the night. Secure in the anonymity of carnival motley, they kissed and fondled each other roughly, laughed, belched, and copulated in celebration of their mortality and the belief that, no matter what their excesses, they would be pardoned and redeemed. Dressed as a French *matelot*, I goosed and howled with the others through the last days of *Fasching*, and on the morning before Ash Wednesday, stripped of all moral responsibilities, I awoke in Munich's English Gardens, with dozens of others who had passed out the night before, and accepted, in spite of the demonstrative proof of a hangover, my unverifiable self as the fragile arbiter of all inconstant things in a slightly probable world.

I should say almost accepted. Old habits were hard to put away, and flashes of thought kept returning to entice me back into quests for a systematic life. $\sim(\exists x) x=x$ was one of these last throbs of speculation, and for several weeks I actually thought that by starting with a logic whose model would be nothing, a logic whose first theorem implied its uniqueness, I might come to the truth about the world through its negation. I nurtured my formula through the spring, taking it with me on trips to the mountains, weighing its logical force against the Bavarian scenery, its decree of emptiness against the Alps' inconclusive beauty.

With summer, however, sanity returned, and I saw that what I'd considered unique about my proposition rendered it a useless contradiction. For if $\sim(\exists x) x=x$ itself was a singular instance, then of course it must be considered to exist, whether as a logical concept or as a sensible, expressive phenomenon. This time, as I stared into paradox, I vowed never again to think formally about anything that mattered, or worry that I hadn't earned the right to express anger at, and snatch relative pleasure from, a universe that tolerates no human predicate.

I HAVE recounted this breakdown of belief because what follows is a narrative of despair and temptation in Las Vegas, and I want it to be understood that I was supported by no body of principles that I felt transcended my own uncertain character. When I went out into the wilderness to be tested, I went, to be sure, with a tempter far inferior to him who could offer whole kingdoms for a soul. But then, unlike him who had been tempted, I was already certain

that all my fathers, from Thales to Wittgenstein, had deserted me.

Las Vegas was the first stop on a trip that was supposed to take me to gambling centers all over the world. But my luck had suddenly turned bad, and within a very short time of my arrival, I had lost more than a third of all the money I possessed. For days I courageously fought back all doubts about my being unfit for such a voyage and continued to return to the tables. I wandered from casino to casino, betting small amounts now and then at craps or blackjack, waiting for a sign of encouragement, a brief run of luck that would justify doubling or tripling my betting units until I was in a position to recover in an instant everything I'd lost. And, indeed, there were flurries here and there of good fortune, but they never lasted long enough for me to feel the confidence needed for increased commitment, and I would wait until the dice or cards turned against me and then wander off feeling that my reluctance had been justified. I thought I was displaying admirable self-control, but I was really simply afraid to face the risk of a large gamble, to submit again to the full force of chance and to feel my entire being at stake in the encounter. Sleeping in snatches, always restless, unable to sit still long enough to eat anything that took longer than a hamburger to prepare, I traversed miles of gambling space, stopping only now and then to make a furtive bet or to peer sheepishly over the shoulders of other players.

I was, of course, paying a high price for vacillation. By betting amounts that could not quickly win a happy ending, I subjected myself to steady erosion by the house percentage. In a few days of caution, I had frittered away nearly a thousand dollars, and the time came when I could no longer pretend that I was acting with professional restraint, that I was not stultified by panic.

I decided therefore to economize, to move downtown to a cheaper hotel, to play in less plush casinos. I did not think of this change of surroundings as a discipline or a penance. Indeed, I felt that I would be more at ease in surroundings that made no attempt to soften the facts of gambling, to pretend that waiting for a wheel to stop or a card to be drawn was a holiday diversion. On the Strip, an appearance of fun and triviality is kept up by player and management, but downtown, along Fremont Avenue, where the casinos spill out into the streets, and where, waiting for a bus or while buying the week's groceries, one's luck can be tested on slot machines and chuck-a-luck wheels, there is no effort made to keep gambling from becoming the only pattern of life. Here a player need not be ashamed to reveal that he is serious and fearful, for it is as though everyone in downtown Las Vegas understands that his survival in a world of accidents is not assured, and the woman who works the handle of a slot machine in eight-hour shifts, the dollar dice player

who times his appearance at the tables so that it coincides with the bar's free-drink hour, the clerks and taxi drivers who reduce their lives' adventure to a standing lunch spent at the roulette wheels—all accept that they are in a *sauve-qui-peut* situation and tolerate any behavior that does not directly threaten their hope for sudden rescue.

I chose a hotel whose lobby was filled with sleeping cowboys and a few dazed women who read comic books or fed babies while their men were off at the tables trying to win the fare back home, or at least enough to pay the rent for a few more days. I was shown to my room by a thin, pale, weary-looking young man, who was as uninterested in the process of my checking-in as I was. He delivered a quick speech on the virtues of the women he could procure, and then left, leaving the door open behind him, as if he knew I would be following in a few seconds. And in just that amount of time I was out in the streets, heading for casinos with sawdust floors, faro tables, and wheels of chance that had been spinning since this part of America was settled. Indeed, as you walk off the street through swinging doors and enter these rough, informal rooms, you return to a time when there was little else to do except gamble, when wages might as well be spent on cards and whiskey since there was nothing to buy, either for pleasure or out of need, that would make the coming year easier than the last. And if you do not actually find, clustered at the tables and bars, besotted miners, garrulous drummers, half-wild hunters, and cowboys cutting cards for an Indian whore, you do meet their descendants: wispy, less vivid specimens, perhaps, but all wearing the blank, fugitive expressions of the frontier.

“CAN I buy you a drink, young fellow?”

It had been so long since anyone except a casino dealer had talked to me that I didn't answer, certain that the man was addressing someone else. I kept staring at my reflection in the giant mirror behind the Lucky Horseshoe's bar, marveling how, in slightly over a week, I had become a study in genteel decline. Expensive suit, but unpressed and spotted, rumpled shirt with collar open and twisted over the jacket's lapels; face washed but unshaven; hair neat in appearance but really made rigid by sweat; expression, that of dignified hysteria, with eyes reflecting exhaustion and a willingness to try anything.

“You don't look that good that you should pass up a drink.”

This time I knew I was being spoken to. I looked at the man and said I agreed with him.

“Blake's the name,” he said. “Boris Blake, the last of a breed. Take a good look at me, young man, for I'm vanishing quickly.”

I did and saw a comically malevolent face whose

most impressive feature was a widow's peak that dropped across the width of his forehead almost to the bridge of the nose. The rest of his ink-black hair was slicked down on either side of a gleaming part that seemed made with a ruler. His eyes were slightly slanted, as were the brows above them. A thin mustache formed a neat triangle with his upper lip, and needed only a curl at each end to complete the perfect portrait of a melodrama villain.

“So, are you taking out any money?” he asked when the drinks arrived. “You look like you've been working hard.”

Even his voice had a twang of theatrical evil to it, a mixture of sinister cackles and unctuous whines. His hands, however, were not those of a heartless landlord or riverboat sharper, not tapered and diabolically delicate. They were gruesomely large, with giant spatulate fingers into which the nails were crushed and embedded. They seemed deformed, yet they manipulated the drink and cigarette they held with unusual grace.

“This town is rough, I'm telling you. You don't get an inch from anyone here,” Boris complained when I told him that things had not been going too well. “You look like a nice gentlemanly person, if you know what I'm saying. And there's nothing around here but a bunch of thieves.”

“All the thieves are on the house side of the table,” I said, hoping that Boris was off on a loser's lament. To coax someone else who has lost into a display of chagrin is one of the lowest forms of comfort available to a losing gambler, but I was not above making use of it.

“You understand me,” Boris said, a bit of amazement in his voice, as if he'd said something terribly complex. “You come here for a little honest gambling and you have to make yourself a sucker, turn yourself into a mark before they let you play. You gotta walk around carrying their vig on your back like some sort of coolie. Everyone's supposed to be equal in this country, so how come the house gets a 5 per cent edge at blackjack and only pays thirty-to-one on double sixes?”

“That's the entertainment tax,” I answered.

Boris reared back, his features arched in shock.

“And you're being entertained?” he asked.

At this point we suddenly were joined by the chief of the casino guards, a huge man who wore a gun and a serious expression.

“You're not thinking of doing any gambling here, are you, Boris?” he said softly. Boris put his glass down and asked why he was always being picked on every time he came into the Lucky Horseshoe, especially since he had lost thousands over the years at its tables.

When the guard answered with a blank expression, Boris demanded once and for all that it be explained to him why he should be hounded and harassed when he had the urge to make a five-dollar bet or just sniff around the games a little. Had he ever been offensive or slowed down the

play at the tables? Was his money counterfeit, his breath bad, his racial origins not suited to the clientele's tastes? Was he, and he used this word with obvious pride in having learned it, a *pariah*? It seemed Boris could have continued his offended performance forever, but then he had to pause for breath and the hiatus in his complaint was filled by a drawled order to finish his drink and leave. Then the guardian of the casino patted him heavily on the back, stared at me for several seconds, and wandered off.

"I am *not* going to fool with crazy Texans," Boris said and drained his glass. "They're worse than the Wops up on the Strip. Up there they don't want to hurt anybody because of their image. Around here, they don't have any image that doesn't go with shooting people. It's their goddamn tradition, so I'm leaving."

DURING the next few days, as I waited for my luck to change, I kept glimpsing Boris prowling about the gambling rooms. Although he never bet or even mixed with the other players, he invariably was invited to leave by someone of menacing dimensions and, after a brief argument, he would quickly vanish.

I vaguely wondered why he was an outcast in a world usually open to anyone disposed to make a one-dollar bet, but I was too concerned with my own persecution to make any inquiries about him. The move to downtown Las Vegas was proving ineffective. In between bursts of luck, I still suffered long series of losses, and each morning I returned to my room three- or four-hundred dollars poorer than I'd been when the day began. With a brain filled with sour memories and sad financial calculations, it was impossible to sleep deeply, and I often simply forced myself to stay in bed until enough time had passed for me to believe that I must have rested. Then I'd jump up, splash water on my face, make a half-hearted effort to dry-shave—I was too impatient to be out of the room to bother with lathering—pick out my most presentable shirt, and head for the streets and another day at the tables.

I was eating lunch at a chili stand when I spoke to Boris the second time. For a day or so I had been unable to keep my hands from trembling whenever they held something, and I was now trying to get a huge, dripping taco into my mouth.

"Appearance is man's greatest asset, so said my uncle the tailor."

Boris was looking at a rivulet of rust-colored sauce oozing down my sleeve. I dabbed at it with a paper napkin and sent more of the taco splattering on the floor.

"They still grinding you out, young man?" he asked, taking a small but pointed step back from my droppings.

"Why do you keep calling me 'young fellow' and 'young man'?" I asked, trying to rise above my run-down condition.

"Just a manner of speaking," Boris protested. "Just a little friendly patter."

He paused and looked around him, his head throbbing forward and back like a lizard's.

"One of the few joints they don't throw me out of," he said approvingly. "Because it's one of the few joints that don't even have a slot machine on the premises."

I gave him a moment to savor his bitterness and then asked why he was so coolly received everywhere he went.

"Because I'm not a sucker," he answered proudly. Then ruefully, "and because I've got too much heat. That's what I want to talk to you about, before they suck so much out of you that you start turning into a lush or shooting a little consolation up into your veins."

"I'm not so simple," I answered, and threw what remained of my Mexican lunch into a trashcan.

"I know you're not," Boris said, moving a little closer to me now that there was no danger of his being spattered. "I've got a good eye for class, and you look like you could move in any circles you wanted to. But let's face it, it don't look like you're doing too great at the moment."

"What if I'm not? Why should it interest you?"

"So you can tell I'm not an eccentric millionaire looking for people to help," Boris laughed. "The fact is, I've got a proposition for you if you can spare a little time. And in a way I am going to give you something for nothing. I am going to make you my heir."

We walked a block or so together and then got into a large station wagon. In a few minutes we were driving outside of Las Vegas, along a highway, through the desert.

"I mean this is bleak land, isn't it?" Boris sighed as we drove through a landscape of scrub cactus, dried clay, dust-covered rocks and tumbleweeds. "I was driving along a highway through country like this in New Mexico once, and I kept seeing signs that read 'Beware of Gusts.' I've no idea what the hell a gust's supposed to be, so I figure you've got to have pretty hard luck to run into one. So don't you know one of those goddamn gusts comes up behind me when I'm doing seventy-an-hour, and flips my car right off the road. One lousy gust cost me three months in a hospital. I tell you, nature can be a mean son-of-a-bitch. Don't fool with it."

"Where are we going?" I asked, as Las Vegas began to recede behind us.

"Somewhere where I can show you my offer in private," Boris said, and after chuckling and muttering to himself for a few miles, he suddenly answered the questions I'd put to him at the lunch counter.

"So you want to know why they don't let me play in the gambling capital of the world? It's because they know I'm gonna rob them. Walk right out with their money, and they gotta just stand there and watch me."

"You do that with a gun, Boris?"

"With these," Boris said, lifting his hands from the wheel for inspection. "With these broken and ugly extremities I make cards and dice defy the laws of the universe. Do you understand what I'm tellin' you? I make Einstein write a whole new book on physical matter."

"So you cheat."

"My friend," Boris answered, after weighing my statement with a few nods of meditation, "there was a time when I would have objected to that word. I would have put in a claim that I was an artist, or a Robin Hood who only stole from those who wanted to steal from me. But now I accept the word 'cheat.' Boris Blake at your service, the best dice and card mechanic in the world. No more, certainly no less."

"How good can you be if everyone knows your profession?" I asked. It was a question that made Boris wince.

"I've been at this for twenty years," he said in his best injured tone. "All over the world I've busted out games that no one thought could be taken. I've spotted cards with cream cheese in poker sessions in the Catskills and switched in shapes right under the nose of the toughest Mafia greaseballs in Brooklyn. I mean I took their money, Friend. Right out of their goddamn pocket. I . . . took . . . their . . . money! Hell, once when I was in jail I threw in a dynamite package against four murderers in one game. I had no fear, that's why I was the best."

SUDDENLY Boris turned off the highway and headed up a side road that seemed to lead nowhere.

"But now, I've just been around too much. Even though no one's caught me in the act, there's just too much suspicion, too much heavy heat. I can't even do a little light work now and then without someone starting a beef. Fame has been thrust upon me, and I can't do anything about it."

"Why don't you retire?" I asked. "You must have made enough by now."

"Young man—after that remark I get to call you 'young man'—what the hell is enough? Come on, you're a gambler, you tell me what's your limit."

It was a good question, one which I had always known I would have to answer, but which I had no reply to then.

Suddenly Boris stopped. There was nothing around for miles, which is exactly what he seemed to want as he scanned the area. When we got out of the car, we were almost knocked down by the desert heat, and for a minute both of us were afraid to breathe or speak. Slowly, I began to slide back into the air-conditioned wagon.

"No!" Boris finally gasped. "You've got to get out. I can't show you anything in there."

"We'll get a stroke if we stand out in the sun,"

I said, and tried to close the door past the wedge Boris had made with his body against it.

"Just ten minutes. I'll show you my whole life's work in ten minutes. Everything that I can teach, but enough for you to walk away with that whole goddamn town over there."

I looked at where Boris was pointing and saw, shimmering in the heat, a Las Vegas of vague, liquid colors and undulant forms. From the distance of the desert, it looked like a mirage, but I knew its reality; knew that I was being offered more than a cheap trinket of the imagination, and this was enough to coax me out of the car a second time.

Boris opened the rear door, took out a folding table, and set it on the hard, baked ground. Then he brought forth a small trunk which he placed under the table, and two folding chairs. He motioned me to sit in one, then took a deck of cards from the trunk and began shuffling them.

"You can understand," he said while performing neat, tight riffles with the deck, "why I wouldn't want to display all this in a hotel room. One nosy bellboy who tells a few stories and all those crazy cowboys who think they've gotta kill somebody once a week got me with the goods. Then they just don't ask me to leave, they do a little job on my body while I'm going."

Boris set the cards down on the table and motioned to me to cut them. Then he began his performance, speaking only to explain the precise nature of each manipulation or to exhort me to look closely at his large, mangled hands. After a few minutes, in that cooked wasteland, I began to feel that we were in some alien world, for what he forced the cards to do made good his boast that he could change our planet's natural laws. Bottoms, seconds, annulment cuts, deck switches, hold-outs, palmings, waving—all were displayed in swirls of easy movement that mocked the senses. The demonstration ended with my dealing him hands of blackjack which he converted each time into the jack of clubs and ace of diamonds.

"Well, what do you think?" Boris asked, sweeping the cards from the table in a quick, single-handed movement.

"An impressive display," I said.

"Only part of my repertoire," he beamed. He then returned to the car and, from under a tarpaulin, removed what looked like a small, topless coffin and placed it on the table. When I peered into it, I saw that it was a scaled-down craps table, correct in every detail, even to its sides being covered with tiny rubber spikes to insure that dice would carom in a manner that couldn't be predetermined. Boris knelt down at one end of the long box, rolled a pair of ruby-colored dice along the length of the shooting surface, and asked me to examine them. I counted the number of spots on each side, made sure they were cubes, and let the sun flash through them to reveal any impurities.

"All right, toss them back, if you think they're legitimate."

I did. Boris picked them up, rattled them for several seconds, and then sent them crashing against my end of the table. When they came to rest, I saw that their color was now a deep emerald, and on closer inspection I discovered that the dotted cubes contained only three numbers instead of six, that there was no possibility of their forming a combination that totaled seven. They could therefore be rolled forever and always make the shooter's point.

"How's that for a switch?" Boris asked.

"Magical," I answered.

"No, just work motivated by a love of larceny. Of course I don't switch in a pair of shapes like that except when I'm playing with some retards."

He then produced the red dice from a hollow in his hand that had been covered by a lump of muscle at the base of the thumb.

"All right," he said, "now I'm going to hold up a six, five times in a row. Keep your eyes on the little red squares."

Dizzy from the sun, I struggled to focus on the dice as they careened and bounced about the table. As Boris predicted, one of them always came to rest with a six-spotted side upward. Boris said nothing after the rolls were over, as if he divined my thoughts and had no wish to interrupt speculation on what it would mean to master such an art.

As we drove back to Las Vegas, Boris still avoided the subject of my becoming his pupil. Instead he told me about the event that had started his decline as a mechanic.

"I mean I had done real well for over fifteen years, movin' from Miami to Vegas, from San Juan to London—anywhere there was action. And I never had no heat. I mean any time I wanted to I could drop into a joint and pick up five or ten large and slip away like a thief, like I'm Boris the Invisible. Then I go to Greece 'cause I hear they've opened up some new casinos there, and it figures that the joints oughtta be pretty soft, with dealers who don't even know how to count chips yet. Well, I walk into this place outside of Athens, a beautiful plush layout with a view of the ruins up on a hill, and it looks just like a piece of cake. The dealers can't even peek at a hand without flashing their hole card and the guys at the dice table, half the time, forget to pick up a losing bet. I mean I could have played on the upsky and beaten that joint *all* the money. But I gotta do what I've taught myself to do, right? Which meant a little holding out at the blackjack table. Nothing too strong. Maybe three times an hour I come in with a twenty-one from my pocket, and nobody even thinks of blinking when I do. I'm not lookin' to make an impression, so after I've won about two thou I tip the dealer real nice and head for the cash-in window,

thinking it's all been sweet and easy, and that maybe I'll drop back in a few days and hit for the same number. Then, just as I'm being paid off, this guy in a uniform walks up to me. He tells me he's Captain *something-or-other* and points to a name plate and a badge he's got pinned on his uniform. Right away I know there's gonna be a beef and that the best way to handle that is to come on strong, start shouting about how much money you've dropped in their joint, how they've got some nerve to get nasty when you finally have a little run of luck, and in general make them want to get you out of there before you start scaring away all their customers. But for some reason I don't want to get this guy angry. It was hard to figure what he was gonna do. I mean, for Chrissake, how do you take a reading on a guy with triangles in his name. So *schmuck* that I am, I let him take me back into his office, where we are joined by two sullen gorillas, also wearing badges and a lot of geometry on their chests, and I resign myself to getting bruised or giving back the money. However, the Captain offers me a chair and starts chatting with me real nice, asking if I'm enjoying my stay in Athens and why I'd chosen Greece for a vacation. I answer him soft and polite, and for a minute I think maybe he's just some guy from the tourist bureau assigned to find out what kind of clientele the casino's attracting. Then he goes and opens the windows and he stares at whatever you call those ruins at the top of the hill and very softly he asks me, 'Mr. Blake, why do you cheat?' Just like that. Like he was asking what hotel I was stayin' at. Well, I say, 'I beg your pardon?' and he, with his back still to me, he sort of sighs and says again, 'Mr. Blake I would like to know very much why you cheat.'

"Well, I'm forced to make a little protest at this, you understand, so I give him my offended act and start to get up from the chair. This stirs up the gorillas, however, and so I sit down, and very calmly demand an apology. But he just turns around, smiles, and asks me the same question again. Did he see me cheat, I ask? Did anybody see me do anything wrong? He shrugs and wags his head like it didn't matter if anyone actually saw me making a move or two, like all he had to do was stare at my ears to tell that I'm a swindler. Then he starts a spiel about how cheating is really no more than robbery, and when you rob you make society a little worse than it was, and since you're part of society you've made yourself also a little worse. Now, I'm listening to this—with two grand of the joint's money in my pocket, I feel I can afford to listen even if the guy is coming on like a mental case—and nodding like it's makin' sense. So he goes on and on, tellin' me that by palming an ace in his joint I'm really holding out on myself since I'm swindling from what I'm a part of and no sane man is gonna do that, right? Right, but I say to him that I, Boris Blake, was

robbing nobody. Only passing a little time. He shakes his head at this, like he's more disappointed than steamed up over the way I stick to my story.

"Then he picks up this little broken statue that's on his desk, you know one of those goddesses with drapery on them that you find in every junk shop in Athens. He gives it to me and asks me to look at it. It's about a foot high and real heavy, and as I'm running it down, thinking the lady's shoulders are a little broad for my taste, the Captain tells me who the goddess was and what she was supposed to have done and all sorts of things like he was a museum guide. Then suddenly right out he asks me if I think she's beautiful. Of course, I give him what I think he wants to hear, and tell him yes. He takes the statue back, nods at it—I'm getting an uneasy feeling that the guy is pure crazy by now—and then he asks me what I would think if I saw somebody relievin' himself on this beautiful statue. I start to laugh, but I gulp it right down when I see how serious the Captain's face is. I tell him it would be terrible, and he says, yes, it would be terrible because it would show ignorance. A person who understands beauty would never do such a thing. I go along with that, and then he makes a quick mental move back to me robbin' the joint. I'm ignorant of what I'm really doin', because I don't understand it. How can I understand what I didn't do, I shoot back at him. But if I had done it, would I understand it? And if I didn't do it, would it matter, if I didn't understand what I didn't do? I mean that was his ploy. Every time I answer a question, he's got another one, and I feel like a job's being done on me, but I can't figure where the con is. I just keep answerin' yes and no, no and yes, until I don't know what I'm talking about. I mean all I can get is that this guy is trying to prove that I'm some kind of moron or a thief, and I'm not buyin' either one of them. But it's like I'm standing on two chairs that are being pulled further and further apart.

"Finally I say no when I should have said yes or vice versa, and to some crazy question like could I enjoy a sunset if I'm not watching it. He gives me a nice big smile and says 'So, you did cheat us Mr. Blake.' I give it one more shot at sayin' no, but he goes over everything we've said, all the questions and answers which to him, and to the two gorillas, prove that not only am I a bandit, but I'm a dumb bandit as well. Then he sort of pats my shoulder and says that you can't blame ignorance too much, so if I'll just return the money there'll be no official action taken. I figure okay, it's a stand-off, so let's be civilized about it. I take out the cash and put it on the desk. This guy looks at it for a while and then gives me a real sad expression and asks me again why someone would urinate on a statue. I remember that answer, so I tell him, ignorance. At this he shoots a look at the gorillas and suddenly each one grabs onto an arm so that my hands are

stretched out flat on the deck. And then this Greek bastard says to me, 'No, Mr. Blake, it might also be that the statue is ugly and the man is doing an act of criticism. You are too certain about things, even when you're supposed to be gambling. That is how we knew you were cheating.' With this he picks up the goddess, waves her under my nose and asks me if I could change my mind about her being beautiful to look at. I know what's coming by the way he's eyeing me, but I just stare at him and the statue for a second and say, in a real even voice so he knows I'm telling him to go to hell, that I'm going to stick to my opinion that she's a beautiful piece of work. He sort of shrugs, and brings that square-shouldered lady down on my left hand, then on my right, and then twice more on each of them.

"I won't even try to tell you what the pain was like. I mean I just kept whimpering all the time they dragged me off to some doctor, who doesn't do nothing but wrap some bandages around them so the bleeding doesn't show, and then to the airport where my bags are waiting for me along with a ticket out of the country. Then the Captain has my picture taken just in case, even with the banged-up hands he's given me, I come up with some way to beat the gambling joints, because, as he says, still talking soft and reasonable, it's hard to learn to be an honest man, even when you've really had a good teacher. Every casino in the world is gonna get a copy of my picture just in case I get confused about things again. Then he puts the statue next to me on the waiting bench and walks off."

I ASSUMED with this story that Boris was making an honest effort to warn me that there was some danger in accepting his teaching. But as I looked at his hands resting on the wheel of the car, I felt confident that I would never suffer such punishment if I became a swindler with cards and dice. At least I would be beyond being duped into a confession by any Athenian logic.

When we stopped in front of my hotel, Boris told me that I didn't have to make my mind up right away. Then he held his hands out in front of me.

"In one year I had them working again. But the pictures ruined me. And to tell the truth, I never could've really made it in class joints. I got a bad face. I mean it's pretty easy to read me for larceny. But you, no one could ever take you for an outright weasel. You could bring what I know into places that don't let me through the door, even if I never touch a deck of cards in my life."

I told Boris that I would let him know my decision, but I really considered his proposal to teach me his craft no more than a fairy-tale boon, like a cloak of invisibility or a golden touch. It had its fantastic appeal, but I was still confident that I needed no wiles in order to gamble successfully,

that I would naturally find my way to good fortune.

However, during the next few days, this idea of myself grew harder to sustain. As my money dwindled, anxious swells passed over me, cold intimations of failure and permanent dishevelment, of a lifetime spent in a casino mob that scurries pointlessly from promise to promise. I kept demanding to win, but could still not find the daring needed to make winning possible, and so I went on changing games and tables, betting five or ten dollars at a time, waiting for an impossible run of luck that would, in an unbroken string of right choices, retrieve all the thousands I'd lost.

During this time, Boris did not talk to me again, but everywhere I gambled, he made a brief, pointed appearance. As a defense against immediate ejection, he had taken to wearing ridiculous disguises—beards, wigs, and glasses, behind which it was absurdly easy to recognize his condemned features and detect his soul's devotion to chicanery. We of course didn't acknowledge each other, and I would continue gambling as though I'd never considered making a pact between us.

One morning, at about five o'clock, I thought my luck had finally changed. All night I had been losing, and I now had nothing left of the money I'd brought to Las Vegas except two \$1,000 travelers' checks. The evening's long series of defeats had left me too exhausted to go through the procedure of cashing one, a process that had naturally become more difficult as my appearance deteriorated. As I retreated from the casino's center tables, I stopped for a second at each of the slot machines along the way, hoping to find one that had been left primed by an absent-minded player. This was indeed a low ritual, indulged in by the most debased victims of bad luck who milled about the downtown casinos, and had I caught myself doing it a week before, I would have stopped in disgust. But for the last few nights, I had tried the handles without shame, unembarrassed even when I knew I was being contemptuously observed by employees and players alike.

Somewhere in the middle of a row of dollar machines, I drew down on a handle and felt it slip past the locking gears. I took a breath, continued to pull, and indeed the machine sprang to life, its strips of colored symbols humming into a single blur that, after three separate clicking stops, would resolve into a trio of bells, fruit, and golden bars.

However, when the whirring stopped, it was not these usual symbols I saw in front of me. Instead, one, then another, and then a third small red heart appeared behind the glass covering, and before I could check its diagram of winning combinations, the machine began to buzz, brighten, and pulsate with colored lights. I rushed to snatch a cup from a nearby table just as a long metallic retch was followed by the clanging eruption of

silver dollars from the mouth of the machine. I filled the cup, my pockets, and my hands, and still the flood continued, coins dropping around me on the floor, adding their clatter to the noise the machine still made in advertisement of its sudden generosity. Other players stopped to help me retrieve them, and even those who had been uneasily entertained by the sight of my attempting to coax free chances from the slots, joined in the search and brought me, with honest congratulations, my silver dollars.

When all had been found, a guard escorted me to a change booth, where a smiling lady presented me with a large, round pin that had the casino's name and "Jackpot Winner" stamped on it. Then she counted the coins and changed them into a form I could more conveniently carry—a single hundred dollar bill.

Naturally, it was not the amount, but the way of obtaining it, that made me feel certain I'd been given the sign I'd waited for during the weeks of slow, grinding descent. I sensed I was again part of a drama that was constructed from the beginning with a just resolution in view. Not to act decisively after such *ex machina* intercession would mean that one should forfeit the right to gamble forever, and so wearing my winner's badge, with the vision of three tiny red hearts held in my mind for triple courage, I went to the craps table, and bet the hundred dollars when the dice were passed to me.

I lost on the first roll, which caused no stir among the stickmen and players at the table, but which took me several horrible minutes fully to comprehend. And even when I understood that an event had indeed just taken place that put an end to dramatics, I could not accept that I'd been used with such cruel indifference. I had not expected gambling to create for me a world of total coherence, but neither had I expected a malicious one. To have tricked me with a false sign, a sign that no one who wishes a human order in things would not trust in and follow, meant that gambling was as perverse as any of the old philosophies I'd abandoned; that it was no more than raw, impenetrable data on which human qualities had been crudely forced. I watched the dice bound upon the table, the chips and money pass back and forth between those who ran the game and those who played in it, and a rage swelled inside me that was greater than any I'd ever felt over the unkept promises of philosophy. Never had I been so toyed with, so beguiled by apparent meaning, and when I was calm enough to leave the table, I'd decided to accept everything Boris had offered me.

FOR the next hour I searched for him in the casinos and all-night bars along the streets and avenues of lower Las Vegas. By now it was well into morning, but there were no social signs around me of a day's beginning. In-

stead, one felt all the activities of night perpetuating themselves, and the people caught up in them, whether just wakened or driven past sleep by fear or amusement, appeared unconcerned with ordinary notions of time. They were used to conducting life's business according to schedules of private noons and midnights, and they filled bars at eight in the morning as comfortably as they did supermarkets at eleven at night.

Instead of the tingle of unease I usually felt when I found myself drifting from one day into another without the traditional pause for sleep and ablutions, I enjoyed the disordered morning. The mixture of di- and nocturnal attitudes helped strengthen my resolve to give up all desire for a design to life, and as I'd freed myself in Munich from an addiction to pure thought, so I now was ready, in lower Las Vegas, to abandon my aesthetic superstitions.

Since it was proving difficult to find a disguised Boris among the early morning rabble, I decided to let him seek me, certain that it would not take very long before he sensed my readiness to come to terms. To make his search easier, I entered a casino I played in often, and walked slowly and conspicuously about the tables, distinctly remembering how I'd lost at almost all of them. I could even discern my old auras at the chairs I'd sat in; sad, unkempt penumbras of energy that faded a little with each losing bet. All that expense of spirit, I thought, for nothing; all that care and calculation wasted.

As I strolled toward the room's entrance, my way was suddenly blocked by a file of tourists behind a guide who announced he was leading them to one of Las Vegas's most famous sights. I waited as they passed, and then watched them form an adoring crescent around the promised wonder—a large, rectangular, glass case that held, in cash, a total of one million dollars.

"Here, ladies and gentlemen," the guard droned in a voice struggling with early morning phlegm, "is probably your first and last sight of one million United States dollars."

The tourists made appreciative noises, and then quickly fell into mute reverence, transfixed by the sight of neat rows of thousand-dollar bills seemingly suspended in the air. Some moved their lips in silent counting; others blinked and wagged their heads in a manner that suggested a desire to disbelieve what they were seeing, as though they wished there were no reality to the number they so often invoked whenever they defined a perfect life. A boy, whose attention wandered for a moment to the pistol worn by the display's guard, had his head firmly turned by his mother until he again directly faced the goal she was quietly setting for him. A young man and woman, who were dressed in a manner that revealed they'd come directly from one of the town's twenty-four-hour wedding chapels, clasped each other around

the waist, as if to reassure themselves that love doesn't need so much common currency, and that the life they'd planned was still a wonderful ambition.

Finally the guide decided it was time to dissolve the solemn mood that had settled over his tour. Clearing his throat for attention, he began in a quiet, soothing voice to tell a joke about a Texas millionaire who kept rolls of hundred-dollar bills in his bathroom to be used as toilet paper. When asked why, the Texan had answered: "If somethin' don't cost a hundred dollars, it's no fun doin' it." There were sputters of laughter, enough at least to break the million-dollar spell. Then after the guide further amused them by smothering the glass-covered money with passionate kisses, they went away content to have put another item on the tour behind them, one which, several were bold enough to say, had proved, after all, a little disappointing.

I, however, was impressed, for I knew if I accepted Boris's tutelage, I would have a seven-figured answer to the question, "How much is enough?" If my goal was now nothing but a well ciphered figure, then one million would be a proper premium for my having learned that there was nothing more to life than the counting of its parts, the gathering of bits and pieces of experience which, in sufficient number, can deaden the mind's passion for self-significance. The money before me meant an easeful passing of time. If it was not enough to blot out seizures of fright in the manner of the mad emperor, to divert myself with games, grottos, and executions, it was sufficient for a comfortable retirement. Looking deeply into the glass of the million-dollar display, I could even see the garden in which I could cultivate my resignation, a place of fountains and cypresses, of shade mixed with meridional sunlight, of bleached gravel paths and sloping terraces, a setting designed for wry thought and doleful memories. I looked again and saw the villa I would own, and, in its one unshuttered window, myself looking exactly as I did in reflected superimposition on the rows of thousand-dollar bills. I wore pajamas, a soft straw hat, and a look that expressed no interest in keeping up appearances.

BUT then this picture of genteel seclusion faded, and only the money remained. The cold thought struck me that in order to acquire the necessary real-estate for my retirement I was going to have to go to work. There would be no single moment of revenge in which, masked in innocence, I pillaged the halls of gambling. Rather, there would be long hours of modest thefts, days and days of pleasureless travel, months, perhaps years, of slow, disciplined cheating that would cause no suspicion. Work was the only description for the wage-earner's time I saw stretched before me, for the long sessions of

rudimentary exercises I'd have to master before my hands could perform the most simple devious maneuvers. After a life of dramatic reflection, I was accepting the fact that my salvation lay in the learning of a trade, that I must labor in order to achieve nothing more than a comfortable old age.

This, however, was the price to be paid. There would at least be no doubt to the outcome of the days ahead, no chance of pain or delusion. Once a few mechanical skills had been mastered, everything would be inevitable, and I would shape my fortune like a careful potter. Only an immature mind would balk at the boredom in this order of things or feel shame over the manual labor involved.

As I stood staring at the thousand facts that would make up my future, the display's guard suddenly stiffened. His face flushed and twisted into a desperate grimace; his eyes, focussed directly on me, seemed to bubble in their sockets. He opened his mouth and produced a rush of fluid noises; then, like a broken machine, his arm jerked and twitched toward the handle of his holstered gun. In one ferocious spasm, he grasped the weapon, took a step toward me, and fell, as rigid as timber, at my feet.

I looked down at the large, uniformed body, and knew at once that there was no longer any life in it, that I had just seen a man die. By the time several members of the casino's staff rushed over and gently rolled the guard on his back, the only human touch to his face was a small clot of blood beneath the nose, which had been broken by the fall. The formality of looking for some lingering vital signs was gone through, and then a coat was placed over the man's face. When this was done, another guard stepped from the crowd and took over the watch of the million dollars.

I stared for what seemed a long while at the dead man's replacement, then turned and went to a cashier's window where a pair of clerks were straining to see what had caused the unscheduled crowd to form around the casino's tourist attraction. I told them what had happened as I presented, along with my passport, one of my thousand-dollar checks to be cashed. They looked at me as though I might be using death to catch them off guard, and then carefully studied my signatures, my face, and my photograph. One questioned my resemblance to the official picture, and the other took my handwriting to be judged by his superior. While I waited to be verified, I watched two men carry the corpse away on a stretcher and the crowd slowly return to the tables. In a few minutes, by the time my money had been counted and delivered to me, the gambling in the room had started again.

I took a seat at the roulette table, made a small

bet on the even numbers, and spun my mind with the wheel. The cycles of thought it contained whirled into a single argument against the small strategies of life that promise certain compensation—for that which is certain demonstrably ends life, and to refute certainty requires a philosophy that finally turns its negative sting upon itself, and dies gasping "There is no greatest number," that "How much is enough?" is a meaningless question. To work, risk, count, or deduce are only methods, whimsical styles of getting through the arbitrary durations of days and nights. If a man does not wish to toil until death, then he first must exhaust all of his philosophical energy in justifying his idly waiting for a pleasant surprise or a graceful windfall. And when there's nothing left of thought, then must there be silence? Is Wittgenstein's *Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen** the end of all tall tales? Not in the least. We simply return to the beginning, to the alternative that was always present in the lighter Platonic moments: *Δοκεῖ τοῖνυν μοι χαριέστερον εἶναι μῦθον ὑμῖν λέγειν*.† And so, before the wheel stopped, I was again making life up as I went along and gambling in order to add some depth and suspense to the saga.

When I returned to my hotel, I found my luggage had been moved to the lobby. In my abstracted state, I'd not paid the rent for the last two days, an oversight that had caused my eviction. The dour young bellboy who had welcomed me was at the desk, and he told me as I paid him that my room was now occupied. Then in a tone that both offered advice and anticipated its refusal, he told me that a bus stopped at the hotel in a few minutes that went all the way to San Diego for less than twenty dollars. What he could see, I already knew; Las Vegas and I had worn each other out. The town had most of my money, but I'd won back my wit and enough courage to keep traveling west.

THE bus, filled with tired Las Vegas refugees, was just about to leave when, from my window, I saw Boris waving at me frantically. He was in a thickly padded cowboy suit, and wore a henna-colored wig and a matching beard of rabbinical length. With an exaggerated fat man's waddle, he moved alongside the bus until I shook my head several times in emphatic refusal. He stopped then and threw up his arms in a gesture of resigned bafflement. I waved to him and thought how simple it is to resist temptation when one can prove that giving in to it requires a much greater effort.

* "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof must one be silent."

† "Well, then, I fancy the more agreeable way is for me to tell you a fable."

What Jewish Studies Can Do

Robert Alter

“AT A TIME of gathering-in, spread out”—a suggestively enigmatic pronouncement of one of the early rabbis—is peculiarly applicable to the present situation of Jewish studies in the American universities, though the other half of that pronouncement might also be kept in mind as a guide to Jewish academic planning: “At a time of spreading-out, gather in.” Since the late 60’s there has been a general shrinkage in academic programs, as government support for higher education dwindled and as the college population boom of the earlier 60’s began to fade. The dismaying spectacle of thousands of job applicants appearing at the academic marketplace meeting of the Modern Language Association to scramble for only a few hundred positions provides a vividly monitory image of what has been happening in almost all the disciplines for the past five or six years. In this very period, however, the study of Judaica in our universities has undergone an extraordinary expansion, for a combination of reasons that will need some explanation, with results and future prospects that are still far from clear.

Until the post-World War II period, Jewish studies barely existed in the American academy. There was Salo Baron, the great synoptic historian, at Columbia; Harry Wolfson, the masterful expositor of Philo and Spinoza, at Harvard; a very few anomalously endowed single chairs at other universities; but no real programs spanning the field, and only the thinnest trickle of students. Biblical studies, to be sure, had been accorded a place of honor in the old-fashioned Christian humanism of our originally Protestant universities (it is instructive to recall that Harvard College retained a Hebrew commencement address until 1817); but a narrow philological scrutiny of the Hebrew Bible, or the interpretation of it as a prelude to Christianity, does not logically lead to an understanding of the Bible as the matrix for the theological, legal, ethical, and imaginative development of the living Jewish people from the Hellenistic period to modern times.

At the beginning of the 1950’s, there were perhaps a dozen regular positions in Judaica throughout the country. (This and subsequent figures do not include positions at rabbinical sem-

inaries and Hebrew teachers’ colleges.) Over the last decade and a half, this situation has been changing at a geometrical rate of increase. By the mid-60’s, when Arnold Band conducted the first careful study of the phenomenon,* there were at least sixty-five positions in the field, and twenty-five universities offered programs, nominally at any rate, leading to a Ph.D. in some area of Jewish studies. Since then, the number of regular Judaica positions has increased by a factor of four or five: a conservative estimate is that there are now at least three hundred such positions in the United States and Canada. The number of graduate students in Jewish studies has grown to around 150, but well-trained people are by no means coming through fast enough to fill all the new openings. It takes longer to train a responsible Judaica scholar than one in most other areas of the humanities, both because of the highly complex linguistic skills required and because of the inherently comparative nature of Jewish studies, which demand a great deal of cross-cultural and sometimes even interdisciplinary knowledge simply to understand the most basic phenomena.

Let me illustrate this recent outstripping of supply by demand with some figures for which I can spell out the concrete implications from personal experience. About thirty-five new Judaica jobs became available in the U.S. for the academic year of 1974-75, with nowhere near that number of competent scholars to fill them, and with the distribution of specialties among job candidates in no way corresponding to the distribution of specialties sought by the various institutions. Judaica students tend to cluster in rabbinics, or rabbinics and history, while about a third of these new positions were in Hebrew literature, generally with a modernist preferred. Now, there are only three American universities that could even claim to offer a serious doctoral program in Hebrew literature—the Berkeley and Los Angeles campuses of the University of California, and Brandeis. At the moment, the three schools combined are lucky to have three people professionally prepared to fill new positions in one year, and they certainly could not produce the eleven or twelve that could

* “Jewish Studies in American Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities,” *American Jewish Year Book*, 1966.

have been placed for 1974-75. (Israeli universities are not much help because their own production of Ph.D.'s in this area is unconscionably low, with very few of the certified scholars they do have willing to come to the U.S. for more than a brief visiting period.) What happens to these jobs is that they are either held open for a year or two until an acceptable candidate comes along, or they get swallowed up by other budgetary demands, or they are filled by an unqualified person—most commonly, an itinerant Israeli with dubious academic and intellectual credentials.

The best institutional index of the recent growth of Jewish studies is the existence of a serious professional organization, the Association for Jewish Studies, begun in 1968. The A.J.S. now has approximately 600 members, of whom about 100 are non-teaching associates, 150 graduate students, and the rest faculty members with either part-time or full-time appointments in some area of Jewish studies. The Association has been sponsoring a series of regional conferences organized around the appearance of distinguished senior Judaica scholars and their areas of research; in a variety of ways it has set about the difficult task of defining professional standards in a growing and in some ways amorphous field; and it is serving as a clearing-house for job applicants and for institutions seeking Judaica scholars with specific competences.

THE definition and maintenance of standards have become especially crucial precisely because of the almost runaway expansion of the field. As long as there continue to be more positions than people to fill them, while in other sectors of the academy unemployment is a palpable problem, there will be job-aspirants who present themselves as Judaica experts on the basis of a command of Yiddish anecdotes, or an acquaintance with the novels of Bernard Malamud, or (what is not much better from a scholarly point of view) rabbinical ordination, or, as I suggested a moment ago, past residence in Israel. It is all too easy to inflate the growing interest in Jewish scholarship into a great cultural renaissance by using numbers alone, but it is often difficult to know what sort of intellectual quality the numbers reflect. Thousands of students across the country may well be enrolled in courses classified as Jewish studies, but one wonders what many of them actually learn when, in a catalogue of nationwide Judaica offerings,* one finds courses like "Yiddish as Joy" and "Leftist Ideologies and Jewish Problems," or when almost every course on modern Jewish thought seems to be restricted mainly to the writings of Martin Buber. It goes without saying, moreover, that the many dozens of undergraduate survey courses offered across the country under general rubrics like "Jewish Civilization," "Jewish Thought," "History and Literature of the Jews," could be anything from

models of rigorous humanistic inquiry to hodgepodes of confirmation-class amateurism dignified with university credits.

Altogether, there is an unfortunate split in Jewish studies around the country between highly specialized courses, perhaps admirable in themselves but accessible only to a tiny handful of students, and frequently superficial surveys that may promote some sense of the Jewish heritage without placing serious demands on the student or really contributing to his intellectual growth. Gerson Cohen's trenchant critique of this educational failing, first delivered at a 1969 colloquium,† seems just as valid now as then: "By and large, Judaic studies today are either tailored for the most advanced students or for the most elementary and ephemeral dabblers." (I would add that part of this situation, at least as far as I can judge from personal observation, results from a collusion between faculty "tailoring" and student desires, for if there is a good deal of interest, numerically measured, in Jewish studies, it often does not go very deep, many students in fact wanting nothing more than a taste of "the Jewish experience" that will make them feel good about their origins with little expenditure of academic effort.) In any case, Cohen goes on to argue that as a result of the imbalance he describes, Jewish studies have had no noticeable effect on the student body while graduate programs, lacking a population of undergraduate majors with the requisite "propaedeutic skills" to go on to advanced work, have been unable to produce sufficient numbers of trained scholars to insure the continuity of the discipline. These are both still grave problems. I suspect that some limited progress is now being made in training more graduate students, though severe difficulties persist in finding students who have acquired as undergraduates the needed linguistic and textual competence. (Fellowship funds from the Jewish community could be extremely helpful, especially when graduate students may need a year or more of extra backgrounding work.) One may at least hope that as more qualified teachers get into the colleges and universities, more challenging Judaica courses of general interest will be offered, and more coherent programs for majors will be developed, so that the solution of the problem of a native generation of scholars will move us toward integrating Jewish studies meaningfully into general education.

If these are, in rough terms, the contours of the new development of Jewish studies within the American academic system, it remains to be seen why this development has come about or

* *Jewish Studies in American Colleges and Universities*, ed. Alfred Jospe, B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations, 1972.

† "An Embarrassment of Riches," in *The Teaching of Judaica in American Universities*, ed. Leon Jick, Association for Jewish Studies, 1970.

what should be expected of it, especially outside the academy by the Jewish community. It is temptingly easy to link the new impetus for Jewish studies with the student agitation for ethnic studies at the end of the 60's and the beginning of the 70's, but the actual chronology of growth in Judaica suggests that militant ethnicity on the campuses could have been no more than a temporary contributing cause. There were in fact specific cases in which black or so-called "Third World" particularism directly moved Jewish students to demand more Jewish studies—one such instance occurred at Cornell—but as Band's 1966 study makes clear, the steady expansion of Judaica antedated the new campus ethnicity; and I think it is also showing strong signs of carrying on with its own momentum beyond the vogue of ethnic studies. The ethnic programs set up five years ago under the pressure of student strikes and sit-ins have in many instances survived only as token operations, not because of the devious design of the universities but because of their limited appeal, after the first flush of activism, to their own student constituency, and because of the general absence of graduate programs which could provide qualified faculty. In any case, the model of ethnic studies is basically inappropriate to Judaica, for reasons which I shall try to make clear presently.

ETHNIC militancy may have given a boost to Jewish studies, but the more abiding causes of this whole development must be sought in a changing sense of self among American Jews, in a general opening outward of the whole universe of discourse of the American university since World War II, and in the presence of the state of Israel as an imposing new historical reality. It is surely no accident that the greatest spurt of interest in Jewish studies has been since 1967, after the threat to Israel's survival and the Israeli triumph in the Six-Day War made the Jewish state an important fact of consciousness for many of the college-age generation of American Jews. Even before that, the existence of Israel for two decades had given Jewish culture precisely what it lacked when the proponents of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* tried to introduce it into German universities in the 19th century—a local place and habitation that would confer on it academic respectability, allowing it to fit into the conventional classifications of academic subjects. To be more specific, one of the important directions of growth within the American academy in the postwar period has been area studies, and with a visible Jewish state in the Middle East, Judaica could frequently be linked with area studies in terms of budgetary allocations, departmental affiliation, claims for federal funding, programs of exchange fellowships, visiting professorships, and so forth.

In regard to the intrinsic intellectual concerns

of the academic enterprise, as universities came to recognize more and more that "high culture" was not limited to the Christian heritage and to Western European civilization, Judaism became a much more welcome subject of study than it had been before, together with Islam and the various civilizations of Africa, South Asia, and the Far East, and even evinced a certain advantage over the other exotic cultures because its history was so complexly and instructively intertwined with that of the Christian West. It emerged, moreover, that Jewish studies had a highly developed tradition as a rigorous academic discipline that went back almost 150 years, so that the field was already endowed with the tools, the terms, the scholarly apparatus, to fit comfortably into American academic discourse. There was no need to limit Jewish studies to folklore and sociology, or to make them depend mainly on field work, for there was a vast body of Jewish literature and historical documents produced over three millennia, and a ramified body of scholarly work on that primary material.

Young Jews—for the most part, third-generation Americans—are also a good deal less self-conscious about their Jewishness than their parents were, and that explains something of their readiness to be seen on campus in Judaica courses, and more, the itch of curiosity about the Jewish past that some of them experience as the uncertain products of an incomplete process of assimilation. As for the adult Jewish community, it has shown repeated nervousness in the face of what it imagines as galloping assimilation, and that has a great deal to do with the material support it has offered for Jewish studies. Roughly a third of the Judaica positions in the U.S. and Canada are supported by funds recruited in one way or another from the Jewish community, or from individual Jewish donors, and so the entire expansion we have been considering could hardly have taken place on the scale it has without the backing of the community outside the academy. Such outside support then seems to have the effect of stimulating support from university administrations, money drawing money: even at this moment of scarce funds, several major universities are allocating budgets for new Judaica programs. In one recent instance, at McGill University in Montreal, the local federation of Jewish philanthropies funded a whole new interdepartmental program, with the understanding that the university would take over financial responsibility after five years. In another case, that of Ohio State University, a single patron both endowed a chair and helped set up an ambitious program, with the university providing a variety of supplementary positions.

Now, I don't mean to suggest that any of this was not money well spent, but I would like to raise a question about the expectations behind such donations (without, however, implying any particular allusion to the two specific examples

just mentioned). It seems to me that anxiety over the assimilationist tendencies of the young is often a reflex of bad conscience on the part of their elders, who believe themselves to have failed in providing the younger generation with a viable sense of Jewish identity through the family, the synagogue, and what passes for Jewish education on the elementary and secondary levels. The university then becomes the great danger-zone of assimilation, where students bound to their Jewish origins by little more than the remembered taste of chicken soup and the oppressive feel of ethnic clubbishness will naturally opt for the universalist, post-ethnic culture which the campus world richly promises. Far too many "concerned" members of the adult Jewish community (and I have had occasion to hear them speak both privately and at public meetings) cherish the illusion that a Jewish scholarly presence on campus will turn this situation around, fill their children with Jewish knowledge and Jewish pride, save them from the Jesus Freaks, the Eastern gurus, the New Left, and (to be perfectly frank) from Gentile spouses.

It should perhaps be obvious that what might have been done and was not in the first eighteen years of a person's life will hardly be accomplished in three lecture-hours a week during a semester of History 234B—Jewish Thought and Institutions. But the unreal expectations by many in the Jewish community go deeper than this, involving a basic misconception of academic inquiry and of the American university. Jewish studies integrated into the American university can no longer be a matter of confessional concern or ethnic loyalty; by entering the academy, Judaica entered the public domain. Jewish studies courses clearly must be open to students of all backgrounds, and cannot be designed to meet the special religious, ethnic, or national needs of Jewish students. (At the moment, one of my most promising graduate students in Hebrew literature is an Israeli Arab; I have taught medieval Hebrew poetry to a Protestant Hispanist with a proficiency in Hebrew, to an ex-Dominican monk who had studied in Israel; and what has been true of my experience in teaching literature is likely to be even more common for those who teach history and religious thought.) Some distinguished scholars of Jewish history and rabbinics have been Gentiles, and the membership of the Association for Jewish Studies is not restricted to Jews.

WHATEVER the composition of the student body for such courses, the inculcation of group identity is simply not the business of the university, and partial concessions on this score made under duress for ethnic studies and women's studies have not proved to be shining successes, either for the university or even for the would-be inculcators of identity. Two principles are compromised, one political and the other academic. On the political side (I am thinking for

the moment of the public universities), one is struck by the irony of seeing the same professional Jewish liberals who are elsewhere passionate advocates of separation of church and state here prepared to give over to the state the responsibility for the Jewish education—whether conceived religiously or ethnically—of their children. The contradiction is more than a formal one. In respect to the Jewish community, it ultimately implies a real surrender of autonomy, and certainly an admission of the bankruptcy of the community's internal educational institutions. In respect to academic interests, a university Balkanized into exclusive parishes in which Jews, blacks, Chicanos, Asian-Americans, women, homosexuals, and other as yet unidentified "minorities" seek to reinforce their respective senses of group solidarity is a prospect that would mean the destruction of the university as an open institution dedicated to the free pursuit of knowledge.

There is, I think, almost complete unanimity among teachers of Judaica that college courses in Jewish studies must not in any way follow the pattern of many ethnic and women's courses in using the classroom situation for what the new political jargon calls "consciousness-raising." Academic inquiry is essentially critical in nature, seeking, in the case of historical materials, to discover through careful probing what is the social, political, ethical, aesthetic, even textual reality often masked by the official version, the treasured stereotype, the ideological simplification. Such inquiry can be bracing, liberating, and instructive, but it may have a troubling, fragmenting, or corrosive effect on the very consciousness of connection with a group that many would like to see raised. Against the vague expectation that Jewish studies might impart Jewish tradition to the new generation of students, Gerson Cohen aptly observed, in his 1969 paper, that the effect of the explosion of Jewish historical research in the last few decades has been precisely to break down the idea of a single, coherent tradition. Half a century ago, he notes, scholars like Solomon Schechter, Louis Ginzberg, George Foote Moore, could still assume a basic distinction between normative and deviant Judaism; now, after the elaborate research on the Dead Sea Scrolls, on gnostic and apocalyptic currents in Judaism, on Karaism, the Kabbalah, Sabbatianism, and much more, this once self-evident distinction dissolves.

My own somewhat peculiar teaching situation might serve as a test-case for the question of differential classroom treatment of Jewish materials because my course-load is more or less equally divided between Hebrew literature and comparative literature. The languages and the historical contexts involved are obviously different, but I find it hard to conceive how my basic perspective as a teacher could differ from one group of courses to the other. If, say, I am discussing with a class in Hebrew literature a novel by Mendele, because

his medium is the novel, whatever the insistence of his national concerns, I raise the same order of questions about the manipulation of narrative viewpoint, the effects of style, the nature of imagery, the larger implications of the grotesque vision, as I would in considering a novel by Dickens or Balzac. Indeed, without a critical awareness of Cervantes, Gogol, and Dickens (in addition to the Bible, the Talmud, and later Jewish sources), it is hard to talk coherently at all about a writer like Mendele. Helping students in this way to read a novel by Mendele with some amplitude of critical appreciation may raise their literary I.Q. but not necessarily their Jewish consciousness. Sometimes, in fact, the contrary might be true. The documents of any body of historical experience, scrutinized closely, can reveal the most unpleasant or disturbing undersides. Modern Hebrew literature, for example, offers in some of its profoundest writers a long, unsettling chronicle of anguished alienation, and it is not without its documents of scathing self-hatred, while contemporary Israeli literature is rich in expressions of radical doubt about Israel that no Zionist organizer, if he could possibly help doing so, would want to put into the hands of the recruitable young.

I do not want to say that Jewish studies in the universities will have no effect at all, or a negative effect, on the issue of group survival that so concerns the Jewish community, only that the effect will be much more oblique and complicated than many in the community imagine. To begin with, it is bound to be salutary not only for some Jewish students but for the intellectual enterprise of the humanities that visible inroads are being made on the old parochially Christian conception of the Western tradition. Maimonides may never loom as large as Aquinas in surveys of medieval thought, but the very fact that Maimonides begins to be a figure seriously contended with in some courses on our campuses tends to modify the available vision of European cultural evolution and the role that Jews—in this case, Arabs, too—have played in it. Such a widening of horizons should make the university a more comfortable place for intellectual development and interchange to all its members, whatever their origins. Moreover, even allowing for the necessarily critical perspective of academic inquiry and for the decidedly modest numbers doing any advanced work in Judaica, one must say that the presence of small groups of students across the country trying to achieve at least some scholarly knowledge of Yiddish language and literature, of the Bible and its tradition of exegesis, of the Talmud and its impedimenta, of medieval Jewish institutions, of modern Jewish thought, means that the multifaceted historical experience and cultural expression of the Jewish people are in some degree being perpetuated as they were not being perpetuated before.

It is also important to keep in mind that any instruction in the humanities, though ideally critical and disinterested, is never value-free. Certain fundamental intellectual allegiances, aesthetic and perhaps moral preferences, surely come into play when a teacher decides on a curriculum, when he chooses emphases and approaches in the presentation of his materials, simply when he devotes himself to a particular field of study.* This obvious fact has been seized on by some political militants as justification for converting the classroom into a workshop for the propaganda of "liberation," but one may hope that the glare and flare of recent activism have not blurred the crucial distinction between using study-materials to inculcate dogmatic views of society and history, and an open-ended exploration which is committed rather to the general value of the materials and, optimally, to the open-endedness of the exploration. Thus, a teacher presenting selections from the *Zohar* to a college class is by no means free to use it apologetically as a textual reinforcement of Jewish identity, to show through it the inherent superiority of Jewish mysticism, the loftiness of Jewish ethical values and national ideals, or the adaptability of the text for contemporary devotional needs. He will in fact have to explain why the 13th-century author should have attributed the book to a Tanaitic sage who lived over a thousand years earlier; he will probably want to discuss early gnostic, medieval Spanish, and other influences; the artificially concocted nature of the Aramaic and the hybridization of literary forms; some of the ways in which the *Zohar* is an intermingling of imaginative flashes, theological profundity, and intellectual mishmash. Any reinforcement of identity that may occur for Jewish students through such study will be a byproduct of instruction rather than its purpose. Teachers who care about teaching generally love what they teach (even if in the case of some materials the love may be highly qualified, or ambivalent), and this aspect of intellectual intercourse is surely transmitted to students, though they need not be expected simply to duplicate the attitudes of the teacher. A work like the *Zohar*, given serious academic exposure, should certainly impose itself on the imagination of sensitive students as one of the great medieval documents of spiritual quest, deserving a place alongside Augustine's *Confessions*, Wolfram Von Eschenbach's *Parzival*, Dante's *Comedy*, and other Christian

* Jacob Neusner has answered Gershon Hundert along these lines in an interesting, if somewhat testy, exchange on Neusner's article, "Jewish Studies After College," *Response* (21), Spring 1974. One must grant the justice of Neusner's observation that the notion of pure detachment in scholarship is chimerical, but that does not, I think, really refute the basic distinction for which Hundert argues: "Scholarly investigation of Jewish history and literature ought to be located in the university. Engaged, personal study of Torah belongs elsewhere."

texts that have become canonical in humanities curricula.

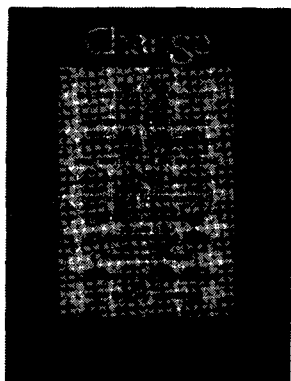
The intrinsic value of the particular material as an object of disciplined intellectual concern—which implies in some degree the value of the culture that generated the material—is in this way communicated in the classroom, but always, we should remember, through the personal mediation of the teacher. Without the slightest hint of preachment, the teacher, as a person deeply engaged in the study of Jewish culture and at the same time a full participant (one hopes) in the university community, in the contemporary world, can hardly avoid appearing as an example to many of his Jewish students. He is an example, of course, that might be followed, modified, ignored, or (perhaps most fruitfully) resisted, but the exemplary function will operate whether he intends it or not. “We cannot ignore the fact,” Michael Fishbane has said in a contribution to a 1972 colloquium at Brandeis University, “that teachers, like the texts studied, disclose new possibilities and modes of being-in-the-world, new points where speech is present. . . . We . . . are complex combinations of our studies and of modern culture.

As such, we are models of various possibilities of contemporary synthesis, even as we point the way to understanding older models of personal and cultural synthesis”* That, it seems to me, is as apt a summary as one could want of the existential values implicit in the humanistic teaching of Judaica. To be sure, the “Jewish humanities” will not save Judaism, for the obvious reason that belonging to a people with a deep sense of common historical fate (for many still a divinely covenanted fate) involves so much more than intellectual analysis. What Jewish studies can do is to ventilate the tradition, illuminate its obscure and contradictory facets, keep alive its ongoing claims on our most finely attentive faculties of understanding and reflection. Community support for such an endeavor is surely well-placed, but it should be proffered without illusory expectations, without any attempt to influence that academic process which, whatever its actual failings and gross inconsistencies, remains one of our society’s most sustained efforts to seek the truth.

* *Jewish Studies: History and Perspectives*, mimeographed texts of the papers presented at Brandeis University, April 16, 1972.

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Movies

Susan Sontag's Israel

Edward Grossman

UNINTENTIONALLY and successfully, the Israelis have resisted the efforts of moviemakers to capture the drama of their lives, be it in so-called "documentaries" or in made-up treatments written for the occasion or based on novels or short stories. That so much of visual and emotional interest should elude the number-one medium calls for explanation. Who has written, directed, produced the bad or unsatisfactory movies? Perhaps the best talents in the field, certainly the wisest, have steered clear of Israeli themes. Europeans and Americans, they probably felt that they did not know enough about the place, and could not hope to learn without living there a long time. So, both before the Six-Day War—when the name of Israel was a piety in the West—and after—as it picked up nasty overtones—the movies seen were heartwarmers and tearjerkers, fundraisers, and some competent travelogues, cataloguing the excavated ruins and reclaimed landscape. Hollywood especially, with its famous large proportion of Jews, put out big-budget spectacles like *Exodus* and *Cast a Giant Shadow* that did good business in America and made audiences in Tel Aviv laugh and groan.

The Israelis have made and continue to make their own movies, and if these are not so ignorant and sentimental as the ones foreigners make about them, still they are far more sentimental, less tough and interesting than the Israelis really are, and they are spoiled by an amateurish quality that is to be expected of productions from a small country trying to do everything at once. Perhaps Jews make movies better in exile, away from the neighborhood where the word was sanctified. Israeli novels, short

stories, and poems aspire to the highest level, and in judging some of them, no allowances need to be made. At any rate, the historical events and private histories that have attended the re-creation and career of the Jewish state are actually nearly unexplored territory, so far as motion pictures are concerned. The Israelis are willing, they will talk and perform and co-operate as well as any Mediterraneans. Is it something inherent in the subject that refuses to be recorded on film? That is unlikely on the face of it, and there is evidence against in the photographs that Capa, Fried, and others have taken. Let it just be admitted that, for whatever reason, the land and its people, overexposed, remain a mystery to the movie camera.

Promised Lands, Susan Sontag's movie on Israel in the days immediately after the Yom Kippur War, does not make much of an entrance into this mystery. Yet it is worth seeing and considering. It is a modest enough little work of discovery, in unnarrated, documentary form, by a neophyte foreigner, that turns into a token of respect for and hesitant solidarity with the people whose grief is its material. "The job of nonfiction films," Sontag wrote in *Vogue* after the movie was finished, "is not so much to develop actions as to represent conditions." *Promised Lands* is loaded with wailing and tears, cemetery and hospital scenes; as it was shot in November 1973, these can fairly be called true to life, no more or less dramatic than what was happening to the Israelis at that time and what anyone with eyes and ears could not help being disturbed by, unless he was preoccupied with reporting it. It was a special time, of widespread shock and unity—unlike what came before or what is following. To be reliable, a movie such as Sontag's had to be unhappy, and so it is. But though she

EDWARD GROSSMAN, who divides his time between the United States and Israel, is a frequent contributor of essays on social and cultural affairs.

generally succeeds in effacing herself before the pain she records, as a recently-arrived, privileged observer should, Sontag also risks making a point through her choice of sights and sounds and interviews, and this is to the effect that the situation of the sad, admirable Israelis is "tragic."

Not all that is unhappy, even profoundly dismaying, deserves to be labeled tragic. Because Sontag is a writer mainly and a philosopher by training, she can be held to stricter definitions, such as the one which she indicated in an essay eleven years ago: "Tragedy says there are disasters which are not fully merited, that there is ultimate injustice in the world." Pain alone does not qualify, in other words, but must be perceived in a special relation with justice and injustice, as well as with the limits of human power to understand or influence unjust fate. The idea of tragedy, Sontag declared in this early essay, presupposing as it does "free-standing arbitrary events," is foreign to Judaism. Now in *Promised Lands*, which she has described as "a film about a sense of tragedy," Sontag's working definition is considerably looser, almost popular—"A tragedy is when one right is opposed to another right."

Presumably, these equivalent rights, tragically balanced, one the mirror image of the other, stem from equally just moral claims of Jews and Arabs on the same sliver of land. To put it evocatively, the land has been twice-promised. Such a formulation is too neat to be true, and although it sounds new to some, especially young *sabras* in Israel beginning to be baffled by endless war and Western radicals starting to delve into this problem between Israel and the Arabs, it is an old idea going back before the UN General Assembly gave it mundane expression by dividing the British Mandate into Jewish and Arab states, an imperfect solution accepted by the Jews and rejected by the Arabs. Years before, Chaim Weizmann had testified to one of those blue-ribbon committees of arbitration that the Palestine Arabs had a very good case for self-determination, an excellent claim—they were the majority in the land, and although

some had immigrated there since Zionism had made it more attractive economically, others descended from clans which had been settled for hundreds of years. The Jews, too, had an excellent claim. They were willing to compromise; but if it came to a showdown clash, their right took precedence, because the Arabs could expect to be handed a dozen or more states of their very own soon, while the Jews had none. Weizmann became a troubled, disillusioned ex-leader, but he did not call what happened in Palestine tragic. The moral formulation was, and still is, more exact in terms of approximate justice demanding to be done than perfect justice denied—to deprive the Jews of their one state would be worse, more unjust, than indirectly depriving the Arabs of their eighteenth (at last count).

At the heart of this dispute is still a stubbornly practical question of justice. This is recognized by Yoram Kaniuk, the Israeli novelist and left-wing dissenter who appears in Sontag's movie (without identification). His weary words of criticism for his narrow-minded government are recorded sympathetically on the sound track. It is Kaniuk who puts the "tragic" formulation into so many words, and rehearses again the notion that "in the Bible, there's no tragedy." It is also Kaniuk who regrets, "The Palestinians want all or nothing."

DESPITE intimations of "tragedy," Sontag's movie is not a balancing act, no liberal editorial. It is clear whom she sympathizes with. Through the images of the mourners (though not of churches, relics, shepherds, goats, yeshiva boys, and street life that only a newcomer could find picturesque), a feeling is conveyed, beyond sadness, of the moviemaker's respect for the communal spirit of the people she is discovering. Especially in times of danger and loss, the Jews in Israel show many signs of being conscious that their fate will be decided in common, never mind that it may be unjust. For an expatriate Westerner, such a brand of patriotism comes as a surprise, something that looks appetizing and nourishing compared with the thin gruel of protest and ridicule that radicals have

served up since the beginning of the war in Vietnam. By her own account in previous writings, Sontag is a frustrated patriot. She would like to be able to pledge allegiance to a common cause, if not a flag; she would like to be relieved of the pangs of cynicism, skepticism, disgust, and sophistication. That was her explicit complaint and desire in the well-known report from blacked-out Hanoi in 1968, from under the American bombs. Apparently this need still bothers her.

For radicals of Jewish extraction, it was easier to travel illegally to totally foreign countries like North Vietnam or Cuba in search of the patriotic experience, than it was to go to the Jewish country, where much that is uncomfortably familiar—beginning with physiognomies and family names—is mixed with the strange and alien. At the most nearly normal of times, Israel is like home, an obscurely threatening, suffocating place for the traveler. It is too much, *de trop*, as the French say, and he does not stay long. Even at a distance, Israel has been an embarrassment. It actively made headlines, giving the lie to categorical pronouncements ("The Jews," Sontag wrote in 1966, "left the ghetto in the early 19th century, thus becoming a people doomed to disappear"). Studied indifference or silence were more typical than hostility. If recently there have been Jewish radicals to leap unexpectedly with fierce words to Israel's defense (see Ellen Willis and Nat Hentoff in recent issues of the *Village Voice*), this is thanks as much to the pained perception of Jews as bleeding underdogs again, as to the shift of fashion.

There is something not altogether encouraging about how some radicals have rallied to Israel's side since Yom Kippur. Over the years, they have proven their love of losing and lost causes; their adherence smacks like the kiss of death. Nevertheless, Israelis are childishly glad to learn of anyone who, for any reason, has a good word to say for them. Although it explains them to themselves even less than it does to foreigners, they may be both unhappily moved and content to see *Promised Lands* when their mourning is over.

Mill vs. Mill

ON LIBERTY AND LIBERALISM: THE CASE OF JOHN STUART MILL. By GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB. Knopf. 345 pp. \$8.95.

Reviewed by PETER L. BERGER

THIS book is an intriguing combination of textual criticism, biographical sleuthing, and ideological commentary. The first part is a careful comparison of the argument of Mill's most celebrated work, *On Liberty*, with other writings of his. It demonstrates a profound contradiction in the conception of liberty between the *chef d'oeuvre* and other statements of Mill's. The second part offers a solution to the puzzle of this contradiction in terms of Mill's biography. The third part draws out the implications of the contradiction for the ideology of liberalism, both in Victorian England and today. It suggests that the case of "Mill versus Mill" continues to be very timely indeed.

The Mill of *On Liberty* argues "one very simple principle"—that the only legitimate limitation to the liberty of the individual is for the purpose of avoiding harm to others. Liberty here is elevated to the status of the principal if not the only value of social life. This absolutization in the conception of liberty contrasts sharply with the views presented in other works of Mill, where individual liberty, while always upheld as a very great value, is balanced with other values such as justice, order, or moral virtue. The Mill of *On Liberty* demands absolute liberty of thought and speech, contending that only then can truth emerge from the unrestrained clasp of rival opinions. The "other Mill" is skeptical about total freedom of expression,

leaning instead toward the "authority of the best-instructed."

Even more radically (and, as his contemporaries rightly understood, with great originality), the Mill of *On Liberty* insists on absolute liberty of action for the individual, limited only by the provision that no other individuals be harmed. Such liberty is deemed necessary for the full unfolding of individuality. Also, it is assumed that such liberty will lead to "experiments" in social life that, eventually, will improve the condition of all. The "other Mill," by contrast, doubts whether most people are capable of making good use of full liberty of action. In that case, only a minority could benefit from such liberty of action. Generally, the Mill of *On Liberty* assigns an essentially negative role to society and the state, the role of protecting the liberty of the individual. The "other Mill" conceives of positive moral tasks for both society and the state.

Miss Himmelfarb believes that Mill was fully aware of this fundamental contradiction. She also rejects the possibility that the radicalization of *On Liberty* can be attributed to a "late Mill," with the more moderate views belonging to the "early Mill." The latter views, she maintains, can be found both in works that antedate *On Liberty* and in works that succeed it. In her opinion, the only reasonable explanation is that in *On Liberty* Mill deliberately exaggerated his formulations in order to cope with one particularly urgent problem that concerned him at the time. The absolutization in the conception of liberty, in other words, was tactical. This urgent problem, Miss Himmelfarb concludes, was the status of women in society. She arrives at this conclusion both through textual analysis (only in Mill's essays on women can comparably radical formulations be found) and through an examination of Mill's personal circumstances during the writing of *On Liberty*. Miss Himmelfarb (hardly

an apologist for the new feminism) tells us that she came to this interpretation "with great reluctance," but that it is the only one which finally makes sense of the available evidence. The woman in the case, of course, is the formidable Harriet Taylor, with whom Mill was joined in a "perfect relationship" for many years and whom he finally married. It is her influence that Miss Himmelfarb detects in the radical formulations of *On Liberty* as well as in Mill's general preoccupation with the emancipation of women.

The case of "Mill versus Mill" is presented by Miss Himmelfarb as paradigmatic of a deep-seated tension between two types of liberal thought. The presentation is reminiscent of the well known discussion by Isaiah Berlin (to whom Miss Himmelfarb refers approvingly) of the "positive" and "negative" concepts of liberty. Mill vacillates between the liberalism of the Whig tradition, in which liberty was embedded in a much broader view of moral progress, and liberalism understood as radical libertarianism. To some extent the tension is between two rival ideals, sometimes coinciding, sometimes in conflict—the ideal of society as a morally perfect community and the ideal of the perfectly free individual. Miss Himmelfarb believes that it is the Mill of *On Liberty*, not his moderate alter ego, who has been victorious. Citing recent controversies and legal decisions in Britain and in this country (for example, on the issues of pornography and the rights of the sexually deviant), she maintains that the formulations of *On Liberty* have attained the status of unexamined axioms in current liberal thought. She makes it very clear that she is unhappy about this, and she suggests that the best corrective to the Mill of *On Liberty* is the "other Mill." The importance of such a corrective is eloquently stated in the final pages of the book: "Liberals have learned, at fearful cost, the lesson that abso-

PETER L. BERGER is professor of sociology at Rutgers and the author of the forthcoming *Pyramids of Sacrifice* (Basic Books), among other works.

66 You're in trouble if you talk

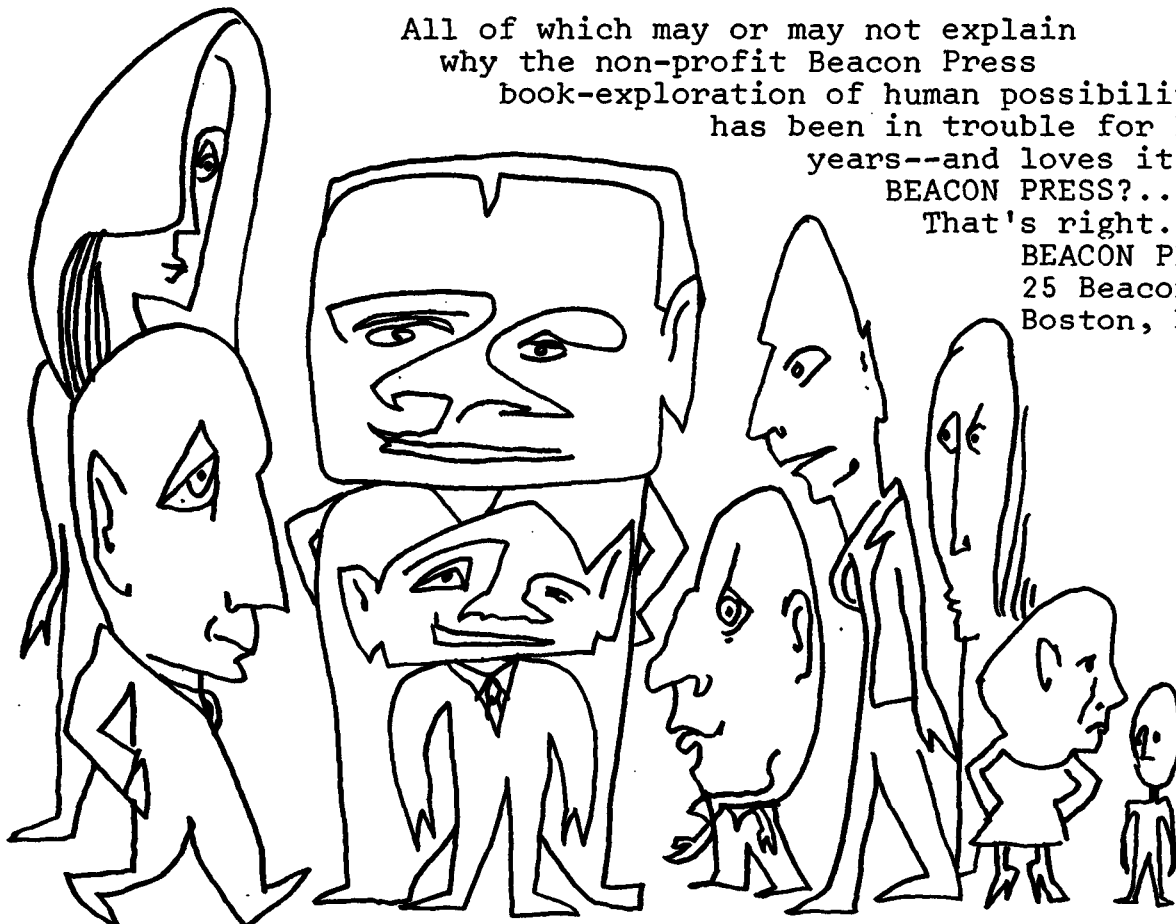
too openly in some circles about Joyce Kolko's new book AMERICA AND THE CRISIS OF WORLD CAPITALISM (\$7.95)...But then, aren't we already in trouble because we were lulled into silence earlier by the manipulators described in Herbert Schiller's THE MIND MANAGERS (\$9.95, \$3.95 paperback)?...Yes, but words can be dangerous things --like those 'right to life' euphemisms that are being used to sentence millions of women to what biologist Garrett Hardin calls MANDATORY MOTHERHOOD (\$4.95, \$1.95 paperback)...So sometimes you have to create new words and new space, destroying old myths, which Mary Daly does by exposing the sexism and patriarchal nature of our social and human relationships in BEYOND GOD THE FATHER (\$8.95, \$3.95 paperback)...And when you get into a religious/political argument, you'd better understand the referee's rules, as explained so clearly by legal scholar Leo Pfeffer in GOD, CAESAR, AND THE CONSTITUTION (\$15.00)...Because if you ever get thrown in jail, the 'system' may make it so hard for anyone to help you that you'll come to realize why Marie Buckley entitled her practical guidebook for reform volunteers BREAKING INTO PRISON (\$7.95)...And if you think you can avoid trouble by leaving the country, first sample the alternatives through books like Hilda Scott's DOES SOCIALISM LIBERATE WOMEN? (\$7.95)...But if you're willing to risk some trouble by exploring alternatives, you don't have to leave the country to make use of such important resource books as FOOD CO-OPS (\$9.95, \$3.95 paperback)...or GUIDE TO ALTERNATIVE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (\$9.95, \$4.25 paperback)...or the Source Collective's ORGANIZING FOR HEALTH CARE: A TOOL FOR CHANGE (\$10.95, \$5.95 paperback)...

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lute power corrupts absolutely. They have yet to learn that absolute liberty may also corrupt absolutely."

Miss HIMMELFARB'S argument is subtle, erudite, and in places gripping, but there are questions to be raised about her broader commentary. She is not really persuasive when she argues that the radical version of liberalism has won the day. It has done that, no doubt, in certain areas of private life—broadly speaking, in that sector of private activity to which the currently fashionable term "life styles" refers. As Miss Himmelfarb herself points out, however, it is a very different kind of liberalism which dominates the discussion of public issues, from government interventions in the economy to the rights of racial minorities. Even in movements addressing themselves to private life, the two varieties of liberalism often coexist in uneasy tension with each other (Miss Himmelfarb herself, once more, points this out in connection with the women's liberation movement). It would seem more plausible to say that the contradiction that afflicted Mill continues to afflict his spiritual descendants today. Looking at the matter in this way only underlines the "relevance" of Mill's ideological ambiguities.

It is debatable, moreover, whether Mill's influence has been as great as Miss Himmelfarb thinks. Certainly it is impossible to believe that the contradiction in his view of liberty still in evidence more than a century later, is simply the result of Mill's uxorious aberration. Although Miss Himmelfarb does not suggest this, the chain of influences discussed in her book is strictly in the realm of intellectual history. Yet the contradiction between the two conceptions of liberty and the concomitant two types of liberalism may also be put in a sociological frame of reference in which these movements of ideas are seen to interact with identifiable institutional processes. From this perspective modern individuation, and the ideologies pertaining to it, emerge as the result of the very specific social structures of modernity, and Mill's contradiction, far from being merely an in-

dividual idiosyncrasy, is seen to be endemic to modern society.

If this is so, there will continue to be great ambiguity about the gains and the costs of modern individuation. Often within the same minds there will be the urge of affirming the autonomy of the modern individual and the contrary urge to escape from the burden of autonomy. Furthermore, if the contradiction has an institutional base, any solution will require institutional forms. In other words, it will not be enough to invoke the "other Mill," or any other intellectual mentor, to counteract the recent exaggerations in the theory and practice of liberty. (This point, by the way, has been understood very well by the critics of liberalism from the Left; unfortunately, they have understood little else about the matter.)

One small point of irritation: the only illustration in the book shows Mill in the company of his stepdaughter Helen (who took care of him after the death of his wife). It is a somewhat alarming picture, suggesting an aging Pinocchio in the clutches of a Turgenev heroine. Yet there is little mention of Helen Taylor in the book. Surely someone at Knopf could have unearthed a picture of Harriet.

Scholar and Critic

A MUSICAL SEASON. By ANDREW PORTER. Viking. 288 pp. \$8.95.

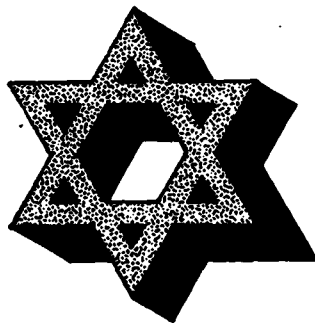
Reviewed by B. H. HAGGIN

"EDITORS," as Bernard Shaw wrote, "by some law of Nature which still baffles science, are always ignorant of music"; and so "an editor who can tell at a glance whether . . . a leading article . . . or a news report is the work of a skilled hand or not" will accept from a music critic "every conceivable blunder and misdemeanor that a journalist can commit." Nor was Harold Ross an exception: in the years in which he was publishing in the *New Yorker* the work of

B. H. HAGGIN, the distinguished music critic, is the author of *The New Listener's Companion and Record Guide and A Decade of Music* (Horizon Press).

the remarkable writers he had gathered on his staff, he was content with writing on music that was not worth reading either for what it said about music or for any intellectual or literary distinction. And this continued to be true of the *New Yorker* long after Ross had been succeeded by William Shawn. Then in the fall of 1972, a London music critic named Andrew Porter, whom the *New Yorker* brought here as guest reviewer for the season, began to write the reviews and essays that are reprinted in *A Musical Season*. I had first learned of Porter's writing when someone had shown me his reviews of a New York City Ballet season in London, which had delighted me with their accurate perception. And after that readers had occasionally sent me his reviews of opera recordings in the *Gramophone*—almost the only competent reviews in that magazine—which had shown him to be as perceptive about music as about ballet. The 37 weekly round-ups in *A Musical Season* confirm those impressions, but also provide surprises, some of them baffling.

The collection includes three reports on the New York City Ballet, which prove to be insufficient; but Porter needs no more than his one each for the American Ballet Theater and Joffrey Ballet to set out completely the realities of their repertoires and performances, and thus to correct the excessive claims for them by the man who speaks for the *New York Times* on the subject. What Porter says of Balanchine's "latest tribute to Petipa's *Raymonda*," his *Cortège Hongrois*, also is valuable not only in itself but as a correction of Clive Barnes's dismissal of it as "a pale version of what we have retained of the Petipa." Recognizing in Balanchine "the most masterly" of those who today "command . . . the grammar and geometry of the language that Petipa perfected," Porter writes that "on occasion [Balanchine] quotes Petipa verbatim; mainly, he creates his own compositions in that elegant, exacting, and precise tongue. He composes purely, perfectly, within the canon of Maryinsky academic-cum-national steps." And concerning Balanchine's earlier *Don Quixote* Porter provides corrective observation not only of



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the second-act court dances, the "cold, precise dances in which aristocratic formality suddenly takes on the accents of menace"; but of the *pas classique espagnol* which Balanchine has substituted for the villagers' dances in the first act, and which is "a wonderful set of dances, superbly fashioned," but with no relevance to the dramatic ballet that is suspended at that point for a mere dance divertissement.

"Love need not blind one to faults," says Porter of the faults he points to in the Balanchine operation; nor, I add, does admiration keep me from mentioning my inability to understand how Porter, writing about Balanchine's *Jewels*, can speak of the *pas de deux* of *Rubies* in his "liveliest Stravinskian vein" and the one of *Diamonds* in his "grandest Maryinsky manner," and not find it necessary to say anything about the one for Moncion and, originally, Mimi Paul in *Emeralds*, overwhelming in the cumulative impact of its slow walking style unlike anything ever seen before even in Balanchine's work.

Nor can I understand how—having seen "not without a pang" another dancer in the roles in *Don Quixote* and *Diamonds* "shaped for the style and movement of Suzanne Farrell"; and having seen *Rubies* with John Clifford and the marvelous Gelsey Kirkland in the roles made for the strikingly different styles of Edward Villella and Patricia McBride—Porter didn't think he should see *Rubies* a few days later with Villella and McBride in their original roles. Nor can I understand his not speaking of the *pas de deux* in *Emeralds* made for the unique style of Violette Verdy. There are other such faults of omission; there are also a few faults of commission—e.g., the very fancy and disputable statement about the *pas de deux* of *Apollo*; and I must mention a major omission in another area—of comment on Jerome Robbins's *Dances at a Gathering*, *Goldberg Variations*, and *Watermill*, which, Porter concedes in one early round-up, he "should have said something about," but never does.

Most of the book is about the

music Porter reported on to *New Yorker* readers, including opera not on records but in the opera house. His generally accurate statements about what he heard are what I expected; but there are surprises in some of his statements about what he saw. Since his eye noted that the Washington Opera Society performance of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* "moved swiftly, in a striking unit set by Neil Peter Jampolis," I am astonished by a comment on the Metropolitan's *Don Giovanni* in which he speaks of Herbert Graf's production—"firm, traditional, and apt; though old, it remains fresh"—but isn't impelled to say anything about Eugene Berman's scenery, which not only is the most extraordinarily beautiful and dramatically effective I have ever seen in an opera, but is remarkably devised for the swift movement of this particular opera without the usual interruptions between its scenes. And I am astonished by the statement about the New York City Opera's "very decent repertory *Carmen*" with José Varona's "traditional" sets—this about a first act cluttered with newly devised scenic details which obscure the scene's essentials but make possible the happenings thought up by Tito Capobianco that distract attention from the principals' singing and action. Nor do the words "wonderful, and impressive," which Porter applies to the Schneider-Siemssen scenery for the von Karajan staging of Wagner's *Ring*, seem to me applicable to, among other unmentioned details, the hollowed-out base of an enormous tree that Schneider-Siemssen substitutes for the room in Hunding's hut as the performance area of the first act of *Die Walküre*—one that repeatedly draws attention to its deficiencies and occasional absurdities in relation to the action. And I am baffled by Porter's comment on the new Metropolitan *Otello*—e.g., the second act, in which Zeffirelli, for no imaginable reason, transfers Otello's study from the traditional room in the castle to outdoor battlements extending across the back of the stage and leaving only inadequate space on the extreme left for Desdemona to be seen with the chorus in the garden; or the third act,

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which Zeffirelli places not in the traditional great hall lined with the columns behind which Otello conceals himself to observe and overhear Iago and Cassio in the foreground, but in an armory, where Iago can indulge in some newly thought-up play with swords, and where Zeffirelli perversely conceals Iago and Cassio behind the racks of weapons with Otello in full view in the foreground. How Porter can see in all this "a bold, imaginative, and experienced approach" enlivening a production "basically conventional" with "clever solutions to the tricky points of stage disposition (the garden chorus, the overhearing scene)" I can't imagine.

Porter, as I said earlier, is generally accurate about what he has heard—the superb singing of Jon Vickers and Teresa Zylis-Gara in *Otello*, Murray Perahia's beautiful playing in a Mozart piano concerto, Erich Leinsdorf's insensitive conducting of *Die Walküre*, among many examples. But here too there are surprises. He begins a review by illuminating for his readers the art of the *Lieder*-singer:

The poet's lines must suggest to her the unwritten details of rhythmic phrasing: here a sweet, lingering accent, there a sudden urgent advance. Verbal sense will indicate the vocal hues. Yet vivid declamation is not in itself enough; *Lieder*-singing, like just about every other kind of music-making, needs a command of pure line—line that is beautiful and eloquent in an "absolute" way.

And a passing reference, many pages later, to "Elena Gerhardt, the greatest of *Lieder*-stylists," suggests to me that he learned from her wonderful recorded performances what he describes so well. Anyone capable of appreciating those performances should be able to hear that some of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's performances are beautiful examples of the *Lieder*-singer's art, but others are flawed by excessively mannered and affected phrasing and expressive hamming—exaggerated pouting, archness, gasps, whispers—that reveal a lack of Gerhardt's controlling sense of measure and fitness, which is to say her unfailing taste. And having heard all this at

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Schwarzkopf's recitals and on her records for twenty years, I am dumbfounded when Porter tells his readers that "Elisabeth Schwarzkopf is of all *Lieder*-singers before the public today the most accomplished," and fills two pages with the details of the marvels at her recital.

On the other hand he begins a review of the New York City Opera production of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*—a work outside of the operatic repertory that musicians and the public know—with an enlightening description of the dramatic character and musical style of the work; the problems created for its performance today by the incomplete notation of its musical substance and instrumentation, the unfamiliarity with the manner of its performance, the voices it was written for; and what Porter thinks is wrong with the Raymond Leppard performance version—all this to establish the basis for Porter's criticisms of the way this version was used, staged, acted, and sung by the New York

City Opera. The review shows Porter to be, like Donald Tovey, an example of the rare combination of authoritative scholar and perceptive critic (and I think it important to understand that the scholar's *knowledge about*, and the critic's *perception of*, a work are different things, and don't necessarily occur together: Bernard Shaw and W. J. Turner, who were not musical scholars, were great critics; Paul Henry Lang demonstrated in the *Herald Tribune*, and David Hamilton has recently demonstrated as Porter's temporary substitute in the *New Yorker*, that a scholar's knowledge doesn't give him the critic's perception and judgment).

The review also is an instance of a scholar's knowledge being useful to performers and listeners—which Porter is mistaken in thinking it always is. He has the scholar's infatuation with scholarly activity seemingly unrestrained by regard for the value of what it is concerned with. Unlike the information about *L'Incoronazione*, the

three pages about the sources of the libretto of *The Magic Flute* are uninteresting and not necessary, as Porter says they are, for someone to be stirred by the work or to recognize what has made a performance effective or the opposite. And I can't imagine *New Yorker* readers sharing the interest in "a neglected byway of musical history" that impels Porter to devote several pages to discussion of an opera, Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini*, which, in the end, he establishes has little musical value or music-dramatic effect; or the interest in anything and everything contemporary that impels Porter to discuss at length a work of "flawless mediocrity," von Einem's *The Visit of the Old Lady*, or even the works of Henze that Porter admires inordinately. Moreover, it is true that someone producing an 18th-century opera needs the information a music historian can provide about the character and range of the voices of the *castrati* who sang some of the roles, in order to decide what voices to use today; it is not true, as Porter contends, that a soprano of today, in order to sing a role in a Haydn opera, needs to know what the historian can tell her about the soprano Haydn wrote the role for. Capobianco reveals lack of historical understanding in having Elizabeth and Leicester roll on the floor in Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*; but the poignancy of Beverly Sills's singing of the two notes of Mary Stuart's "*Ah! si*" does not demonstrate, as Porter contends, that historical understanding is required for Donizetti's music, and Mozart's, and Mahler's, to "yield its full eloquence." And the 1915 Metropolitan *Il Trovatore* that was talked about for decades thereafter was produced by Toscanini without Martin Chusid's treatises on tonal structure in *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*, which Porter, reviewing a Metropolitan performance of *Il Trovatore*, thinks "should be mastered by the men . . . directing [the] performers" in Verdi's operas at the Metropolitan.

But one must, in conclusion, apply to Porter what Tovey said of Schubert, and say that his occasional inequalities of performance cannot make him a critic of less than the highest rank.

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PILGRIM AT TINKER CREEK. By ANNIE DILLARD. *Harper's Magazine Press*. 271 pp. \$7.95.

ZEN AND THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE. By ROBERT PIRSIG. *Morrow*. 412 pp. \$7.95.

Reviewed by EVA HOFFMAN

QUESTIONS of respective merit aside, the quick popularity achieved by both these books is surely symptomatic of more than purely literary preferences. The success is well-deserved in one case, baffling in the other, but in both instances it can be at least partially attributed to the mode in which the books are written, the enterprise they undertake, the services they propose to perform. Both belong squarely in the American tradition of essayistic narratives in which one person, unencumbered by *idées reçues*, stripped of conventional prejudices, tries to "front the essential facts," to make sense of the universe starting from degree zero. Thus they probably answer a generally felt need; they reassert the ability of the individual mind to come to terms with murky complexities, they legitimize personal understanding attained without the mediation of specialized or institutionalized knowledge.

Thoreau is the tutelary deity behind both books. *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* is forthrightly modeled on *Walden*. It is an account of one person's year of fairly solitary communings with nature, of close observation and intense thought. Like Thoreau, Annie Dillard sets out to travel much at Tinker Creek, to explore the neighborhood and see what it can tell her about the world. From Thoreau, she inherits the talent for transforming natural facts into metaphors of the mind. One of the most pleasing traits of the book is the graceful harmony between scrutiny of real phenomena and the reflections to which that gives rise. Anecdotes of animal behavior become effortlessly enlarged into symbols by the deepened insight of meditation. Like a

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true transcendentalist, Miss Dillard understands her task to be that of full alertness, of making herself a conscious receptacle of all impressions. She is a connoisseur of spirit, who knows that seeing, if intense enough, becomes vision.

The interpretation of the natural world which emerges from the accumulated impressions is, in a sense, a polemic against philosophies of disillusionment and absurdity, affirming that abundance, extravagance, beauty, and power are facts, as integral to nature as waste, pain, and death. If this repeat performance is convincing, even in our skeptical age, it is largely because of the beauty of the language, which is scrupulously precise, unpretentiously lyrical, and sometimes charged with power of concentrated perception. Most of the natural lore which she chooses to relate is fascinating enough in itself, and Miss Dillard has a good eye for its most dramatic elements. She shifts her scale of vision from the infinitesimal to the infinite; she continually regenerates a sense of surprise, of being caught into vision unawares; she has the rare ability to recreate the emotional tone of experience without abandoning accuracy or specificity of detail.

The book, then, is admirable in the handling and shaping of its materials; its weakness resides in what it fails to consider. The implicit claim of *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* is to suggest an inclusive, a sufficient vision of experience, yet it dismisses with hardly a flick of the wrist, as Thoreau never would have done, the whole issue of man-made civilization. The narrator has lived in cities, taken stock of what they have to offer, and decided against them. Very well, but not everyone can abandon urban evils for idyllic rural retreats. How are cities, with their technological ugliness, their excesses and deprivations, to be reconciled with the book's recipe for living, with its conviction of overriding plenitude and grace?

EVEN if *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* is in some measure escapist, its discipline within confines is more fertile than the amorphousness of Robert Pirsig's efforts to tackle ev-

ery issue without firmly grasping any. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* is a book full of grandiose promises and undelivered goods. The narrator-author is in the habit of reading Thoreau to his eleven-year-old son, but midway through their travels together he abandons the practice, declaring that he is now at the vanguard of thought where no books are sufficient to guide him. Presumably, with *Zen* he jumps into the breach and gives us a manual for our times.

The organizing device of the book is a motorcycle trip to the West Coast taken by the narrator with his son and two friends. The narrator is also accompanied by the "ghost" of a past self whom he names Phaedrus. Phaedrus's existence was terminated when he went insane and was administered shock therapy. The writer, in his new avatar, has only dim memories of Phaedrus, but he tries to reconstruct him by retracing the mental voyage which led to his madness. The memories of Phaedrus's intellectual peregrinations, as well as the present narrator's thoughts, are shared with us in "Chautauquas"—familiarily chummy sermonettes full of homespun sagacity and tedium. Between the Chautauquas, the writer exchanges some words with his flesh-and-blood companions, gives advice on how to maintain motorcycles, describes the scenery, and imparts the fruits of his sociological observations distinguished by a knack for the obvious ("We see much more of this loneliness now. It's paradoxical that where people are the most closely crowded, in the big coastal cities, in the East and West, the loneliness is the greatest. . . . The explanation, I suppose, is that the physical distance between people has nothing to do with loneliness. It's psychic distance. . . .").

The author assures us that Phaedrus's intellectual odyssey is reflective of our times, that his concerns and conflicts are our conflicts, and that in their reconciliation lies the solution to more general ailments, such as the pervasive alienation from technology. Essentially, Phaedrus had two revelations: first, that scientific theories are not necessarily absolute truths, and secondly,

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that there may be more than one way to view reality, and that these ways are not always compatible. Phaedrus organizes the ensuing confusion by devising the categories of "Classicism" and "Romanticism." Classicists emphasize rational analysis and underlying forms, Romantics pay attention to immediate appearances. Science and technology (used interchangeably throughout the book) belong to the Classical camp; the arts are Romantic. Then, file "squares" under Classicism and "hipsters" under Romanticism, and bingo, you have got a picture of our national predicament.

Once he perceives these dichotomies, Phaedrus, naturally eager to find a way of restoring concord and unity, proceeds to study the great philosophers. After long and tortuous meanderings that almost lead to despair, he is unexpectedly rescued by a conception sprung full-blown from his mind, to which he refers as "Quality." "Quality" is pre-intellectual, pre-analytical reality; it is the essence by which we

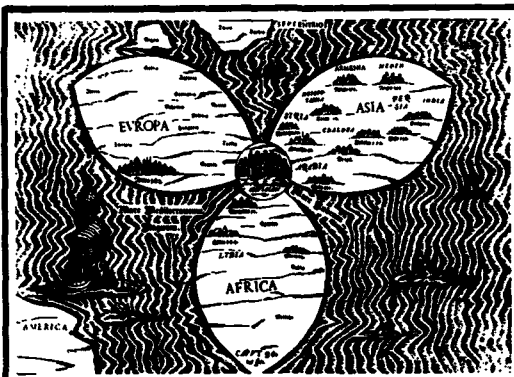
know what is good; like the Buddha, it resides in everything. Since it is not a rational entity, one cannot say too much about it, but it is going to unify "the three areas of human experience which are now disunified. These three areas are Religion, Art, and Science." How? Well, for one thing, if you perceive Quality that is everywhere, you can approach your motorcycle with a different attitude. You can get into it, love it, fix it with peace of mind rather than in alienated frustration.

This, then, is the long-awaited solution; but to what problem? Grooving on your bike is all to the good, but it is not what technology is about. The real dilemmas—technology on mass scale, the consequent monotony and specialization of work—are not touched upon. The Solution, then, is an answer to pseudo-questions, and thus no answer at all.

One may argue, following some broad hints in the Chautauquas, that the cycle is not a machine at all, but a metaphor for the self,

and that Quality is psychic medicine. If so, there is no demonstration of its palliative effects within the book. The narrator's post-Phaedrus relation to his son, for example, is appalling in its poverty. He dismisses the questions of the obviously vulnerable boy with monosyllables or archly mystifying answers. He is inconsiderate, despotic, and watches passively as his son's mental condition deteriorates. His final realization that he may not have lived up to the ideal of fatherhood is the moral equivalent of noticing one fine day that the sky is blue when it isn't cloudy.

One of the perplexing questions which the book poses is not only what precisely the ideas of Romanticism, Classicism, and Quality mean, but also why they drove Phaedrus into insanity. The suspicion is that they did not. From behind these formless and incoherent abstractions, another story emerges—an unhappy story of a man who, especially as a thinker, is completely companionless. He himself explains that his loneliness is proportionate to his intelligence, and that if he appears remote and unsociable, it is because he cannot bother his friends with his wild notions, cannot trust anyone to understand them. Phaedrus did not have better luck with institutions of higher learning than with his friends, and the book often reads like an embittered self-vindication of an unsuccessful college student. The author finds occasion to mention his IQ; he informs us of his progress in his courses, and tells us that if he is not doing well, it is because he is possessed of a rare commodity known as an independent mind. This radical isolation leads to an embarrassing lack of perspective and proportion. Phaedrus is inordinately impressed with himself for thinking at all; he indulges in strutting braggadocio, and he purveys banalities as great discoveries. He has an inquiring mind and he cares about implications of ideas for living—but his attitude toward thought is that of a religious neophyte who is disillusioned because he has not seen God face to face, and decides, thereupon, to deify himself.



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ISOLATION has always been the

American writer's advantage and plight, and these two works are studies in its uses and hazards. For the author of *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, solitude affords the means for intense meditation, for plumbing deep rather than roaming wide; escape, in Miss Dillard's case, leads to a confrontation. The writer of *Zen* falls into every trap. Without the benefit of criticism, he does not develop the faculty of self-judgment. He cannot gauge the importance of his ideas, their relationship to each other, or his own worth as a thinker. It is disturbing that this book should have become an object of a minor cult, for it indicates a willingness to be lulled by simplicity. The simplicity of *Zen* is especially insidious because it masquerades as tough wisdom. But beneath the complexity of disorganization, the picture of society which the book presents, the panaceas it offers, are distressingly naive and reductive, evading the very difficulties the book pretends to confront. As an attempt at "making sense," *Zen* may be a useful personal exercise, but on grounds of Quality, it fails to gain general value or credibility.

Muckraking

LINCOLN STEFFENS. By JUSTIN KAPLAN. *Simon & Schuster*. 380 pp. \$10.00.

Reviewed by SAMUEL McCracken

WE SHOULD NOT be surprised to find Lincoln Steffens undergoing a modest revival, for there is much in his career and character that is apposite to our own situation and congenial in principle to the political sentiments of today's liberals and radicals. If he did not invent investigative journalism, Steffens was its first successful practitioner, exposing, in one devastating article after another, the fiscal and political rascalities of city government and providing information that helped for a time to put reformers at the municipal helm. Then, after World War I, when it became obvious that the triumph of virtue had been temporary, Steffens,

like others of that company of muckrakers in which he was first among equals, despaired of reform through the old system; he sought, and found, a new one in Communism. Along the way, he found time to compose his *Autobiography*, a classic work in which comprehensiveness and charm war with idiosyncrasy to an extent that demands the neutral services of a biographer. For, master of exposure when it came to the conspiratorial workings of others, Steffens kept a veil of paradoxes over his own character. Despite Justin Kaplan's graceful study, the veil is still there.

Lincoln Steffens is a smooth account of the age of muckraking and the issues that engaged it. Kaplan does not resist the temptation to compare that age with our own, the age of Ralph Nader and Watergate, and the comparison, which is apt (more so even than he makes out), raises some substantial questions about reform and exposure, as well as about the paradoxes in Steffens's character.

"Muckraker" is one of those la-

bels originally affixed in contempt but eventually worn with pride. It was Theodore Roosevelt who was responsible for the term, in a 1906 speech, "The Man with the Muckrake," in which he compared the entire group of journalists (which he later claimed did not include Steffens) with Bunyan's unpleasant figure. He had earlier voiced his objection to the group with greater succinctness, if less violence: they did not put enough sky in their landscapes. The journalists reacted to the speech with outrage; Bunyan's figure, they said, was a raker in the muckhole of material things, whereas they were pure idealists, attacking wealthy malefactors without thought of reward. Their reply did not really meet Roosevelt's charge, and it also showed a naiveté that endures today: the belief that it is only money that can corrupt. (A recent representation of this was Richard Nixon's assertion that as bad as Watergate might have been, at least none of his associates had profited financially by their crimes.)

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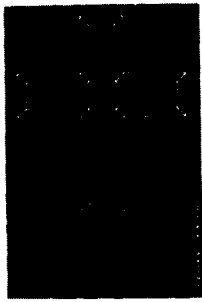
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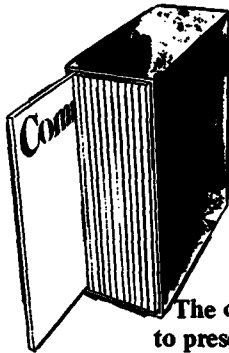
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But if the muckrakers' defense failed to answer Roosevelt's charge, he in turn had also been wide of the mark. The principal danger in muckraking was not that it discouraged positive thinking, but that, as became abundantly clear in the 20's and 30's, it led to an infatuation with totalitarian methods. Ida M. Tarbell and S. S. McClure knelt at the shrine of Mussolini, the eminent reformer and rectifier of train schedules whom Steffens called the Divine Dictator. Steffens himself became to fellow-traveling in America what George Bernard Shaw was in England. His famous remark after visiting Bolshevik Russia, that he had seen the future and that it worked, was more than a mistaken impression, it was the statement of a deep-seated will to believe.

THERE is something extraordinary in this willing embrace of totalitarianism on the part of one whose standards for municipal government had been so relentlessly maintained. How can we explain a man, who had strained so obdurately at the gnat of Richard Croker, voraciously wolfing Joseph Stalin? Kaplan explains it Oedipally: Steffens was in revolt against his own stern and repressive businessman-father, and found new father-figures in Mussolini and Stalin. In fact the evidence that Steffens's father *was* stern and repressive is rather dubious; Steffens's own account in the *Autobiography* and in his essay, "The Influence of My Father on My Son," suggests rather the opposite. But all this aside, it is worth wondering whether the descent into totalitarianism does not have a *political* explanation as well.

A reformer by his nature sees a disparity between what is and what should be. To a cynic or optimist, the disparity may appear small, but to a utopian pessimist it will be very great; and the greater the disparity, the more dreadful the measures an idealist is likely to tolerate in the interests of closing it. There is a less obvious consideration, too. "Good government," as reformers see it, has no necessary connection with human freedom. The streets of Moscow are surely better swept than those of Boston: in a society where bribe-takers are

shot, undoubtedly fewer bribes are taken. Freedom is inseparable from a certain amount of disorder, and corruption is no more than a special kind of disorder. In the younger Lincoln Steffens the taste for reform was associated with a belief in freedom (one of the things wrong with corrupt government according to the early Steffens was the way it had destroyed democracy in the big cities), but eventually, perhaps despairing of ever reconciling them, he came to dissociate the two ideals.

That the author of *The Struggle for Self-Government* proved able to embrace Stalin and his terror should be a lesson to us all. The indictment of society made by the new muckrakers is hardly less damning than that made by Lincoln Steffens (as a matter of fact, the cool philippics of Ralph Nader make things out much worse than did the heated turn-of-the-century rhetoric of Steffens), and many of the new muckrakers and their followers are noticeably concerned more with neatness than with liberty. Now that the members of the Consumer Products Safety Commission can forbid us anything they regard as too dangerous, including firecrackers on the Fourth of July, we may be safer than we used to be, but we are also less free. Steffens's career offers splendid evidence that a little utopia is more than enough.

Amazing Grace

THREE AMERICAN MORALISTS:
MAILER, BELLOW, TRILLING. By
NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR. *University of Notre Dame Press*. 237 pp.
\$6.95.

Reviewed by JOHN ROMANO

THERE can be no doubt that the liberal, literary intelligence that came to maturity after World War II has declined in prestige and influence during the past decade. The harassed but faithful humanism that informed the sensibility of Moses Herzog has given way, on

JOHN ROMANO, who is completing his doctorate in English at Yale, contributed "Sylvia Plath Reconsidered" to our April number.

most fronts, to the chill neurology of *Gravity's Rainbow*, and the reasons are literary only in the broadest sense. The political and cultural din of the 1960's, with its fiercely limited vocabulary of commitment and "relevance," put under fire, as the previous decade had failed to do, the capacity for what Lionel Trilling called "an idea in modulation," for action and belief at once passionate and poised between extremes. The liberal's "divided soul," his spiritual inheritance from Romanticism, became a radical liability, as for Bellow's Mr. Sammler, or John Laskell, the Left-Center protagonist in Trilling's *Middle of the Journey*. Even the observer-hero of Norman Mailer's novels-as-history could exist only on terms of mutual discomfort with his wide audience because he exhibited unfashionable self-consciousness and caution toward the committed act.

At present we pick our way among the consequences of that period. If the impact in the area of politics produced the Symbionese Liberation Army on the one hand and Gordon Liddy on the other, the results in the literary and intellectual community have been all in another direction. The necessity for commitment has been replaced as a theme by claims for the impossibility of commitment, which is presented as an "a-historical," cosmological impossibility. The heroes of Camus and Mailer, once taken as existential emblems for alienation and self-loss, seem now to be whole and integrated and viable selves, when placed beside the characters of Barth and Pynchon, or of *Last Tango in Paris*. An ascendant school of critics takes luxurious refuge in the prison-house of consciousness, and bolts the door with the argument that language is finally a system referring only to itself. They are in flight from that "radically demanding historical hour" (Buber) to which the previous generation of writers and critics—Mailer and Bellow and Trilling among them—responded with abundant and sincere intelligence, however divided against itself.

Between the lines of Nathan Scott's *Three American Moralists* may be read a document in the developing exchange on the above is-

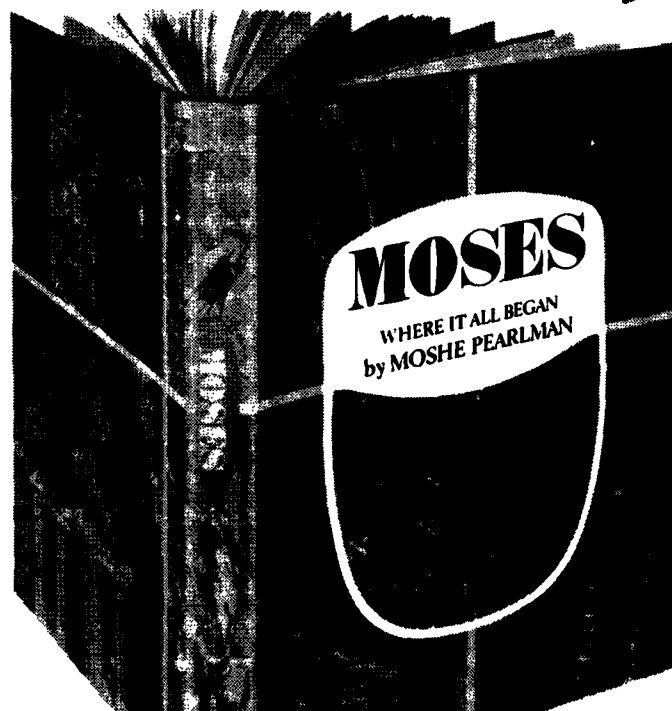
sues. It is a partisan document. Scott displays profound aversion to what he calls the "New Sensibility" and "The-Beatles-and-all-that," with no apparent sense that "all that" is probably over, and more than insinuates his preference for "the dim, gray years of the Eisenhower dispensation" and the literary-intellectual climate of that time. As a simple matter of taste, this preference is harmless, but in critical practice it interferes with

Scott's avowed intention of examining his writers in their role as public moralists. He is too eager to dissociate them from "the general slump of our cultural life," "the general slackening of intellectual life in this country sponsored in recent years by the devotees of the New Left." What in fact distinguishes Mailer, Bellow, and Trilling from the recent cultural tidal wave is, as I have tried to say above, both tangible and important, but

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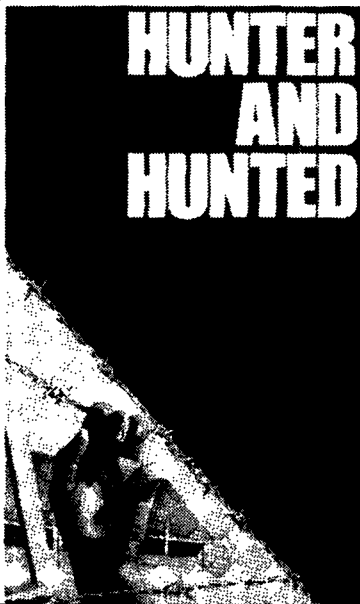
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it is the continuity, the submerged links and lines of force between two decades of Left intellectuals, that cries out for fine and patient discernment. It is here that Scott's crustiness and nostalgia betray him.

Scott, it is not irrelevant to note, is a Protestant minister and professor of divinity at Chicago, while the men he studies are, he says, "Jews—and thoroughly secular men." His ecumenicism alone is not surprising, especially if we know that, in numerous books and articles appearing over twenty years, Scott has brought to bear upon the study of modern writers the methods of contemporary theological inquiry, finding serviceable *exempla* for the most benign and elegant Christian ideas even in so crisply man-hating and God-hating a writer as Samuel Beckett. But Mailer, Bellow, and Trilling do not share in their work the opacity and ellipses of Beckett. Instead, they speak well and clearly of their own spirituality, and ask simply to be understood. Scott argues, as though absolving them of the need for forgiveness, that "though [Mailer, Bellow, and Trilling] find grace and glory not in infinities and eternities but in the quotidian realities that are at hand for the creatures of this world," they are nonetheless spokesmen for a kind of "transcendence," albeit "transcendence downward," a rising up "by way of a path that leads *through* the concrete materialities . . . of our creaturely life." This is arguably true, especially when due regard is given to the fact that each of these writers, in his own way, has forsworn the effort to name, to concretize, that realm of fulfillment into which man may, upward or downward or sideways, transcend—the fact that with each of them their "secularity" is a conscious article of faith. But in his urge to establish their contiguity with orthodox religion Scott is dogged and hell-bent, and proceeds at the cost of nuance and also of declared intention in his writers. As a result, the chances for a just elucidation of their own moral views are sacrificed to Scott's effort to find a lowest common denominator of spirituality in which his position and theirs can be included.

This will to accommodation is

something the divinity schools learned a generation ago under the influence of the great religious teachers of the mid-century, Niebuhr and Tillich and Buber among them. Those profoundly open minds absorbed not only the horrible givens of the war years, but also the insights and even the vocabulary of the atheistic European existentialism that followed in their wake. The risk in such inclusiveness, to which the masters were unceasingly alive, is that finally a theology is described which can absorb anything, even its opposite, and ends in meaninglessness. An example of Scott's falling victim to this danger can be found in his defense for adducing the concept of *sola gratia*—salvation by grace alone—in a reading of Bellow's *Augie March*. "I will appear to be wanting to bring the design of Mr. Bellow's thought into the *ambiance* of things that are distinctively Christian," he says, but "this would surely be an error," because Bellow's work is "drenched" in "Jewish experience." In fact, though, Scott goes on, the issue is not "denominational" at all, to prove which he cites, in the course of an astounding paragraph, analogous ideas in Simone Weil, Karl Heim, Gabriel Marcel, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Lao-Tse, the Baal Shem Tov, Meister Eckhart, and William Blake. This should eliminate any surprise that he seeks to bring Norman Mailer and Lionel Trilling into line.

In fact, it is with Mailer and Trilling that this book's faults are most egregious. It is by no means inappropriate to think of Mailer as a moralist, insofar as he has attempted to lure and to goad America off the flat, middling, "value-free" stretch of highway down which it has taken its course. He is a moralist indeed who, at the present hour, reminds us of the excitements of the conscious moral act, either of sin or its opposite. "We," Mailer has written—meaning himself—"are a Faustian age determined to meet the Lord or the Devil before we are done." Though both these alternatives are seriously meant, Scott's reading finds only the first to be Mailer's sincere self. He cites approvingly Richard Foster's notion that Mailer *really*

wants "to steal back, for the languishing forces of 'God,' some of the energies of life which have passed over to the forces of darkness." On the other hand, manifestations of Mailer's Satanic impulse Scott understands, rather blandly, as "metaphors." The result is an absurdly one-sided apprehension of the writer. What does Scott make of such an essay as "The White Negro," with its "metaphor" of the hipster who must purge himself by "expressing actively" every "forbidden impulse" that enters his head, as Stephen Rojack does in *An American Dream*? Undaunted, Scott finds himself able to say that although Mailer's "metaphors" are indeed "shockingly nihilistic" and the writer "did himself sometimes seem to forget that they were metaphors," what Mailer finally means to convey is "great rage over the stifling mediocrity of the human landscape" and even "a great desire to redeem." There is truth in this, however nearly crowded out: Rojack is a metaphor for unhampered American maleness, indulgent of the personal and racial appetite for evil and violence. But Scott misses how genuinely Mailer would have us delight in this indulgence, how deeply the reader is asked to commit himself, in imagination, to Rojack's thirty-two hours. The novel is animated, affectively, by a love of evil that it is oddly perverse to deny. Though our dialectical sense may alert us that, in his insistence on Sin, Mailer invisibly affirms the Good, the affirmation is askew, reluctant—untenable as morality.

Scott's abundant praise of Lionel Trilling is addressed to that great critic's allegiance to a vision of "the human being in maturity, at once responsible and conditioned." According to Scott, Trilling "is . . . John Laskell," who bravely forgoes the "systematic certainties" of the Marxist and Catholic dogmatists by whom he is flanked. Scott's formulations of this matter are surely his most effective in the book: Trilling is both "a man of the Enlightenment (who is thoroughly committed to the adventure of the will, to the rational mastery of the world) and a Romantic (who believes that man is the creature of a world which, ultimately, surpasses his

power to weigh and measure and manipulate)." In such passages, Scott displays an ability he seems not to possess elsewhere, to stand, in Geoffrey Hartman's phrase, with "innocence before the text." It is the more disappointing, then, as well as logically inconsequent to an extreme degree, that Scott should end in an attempt to persuade Trilling to forsake the "idea in modulation," and formulate . . . well, a creed: according to Scott,

there are signs in Trilling's late work that

may augur some new readiness to undertake in a more forthright way the further philosophical (and perhaps even in some sense theological) task of which it has been the special distinction of his literary criticism to be a kind of pledge. At least this, one feels, is the best hope to be entertained for the remaining phase of his career. For very

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probably, it will not be until aposiopesis [negative criticism] as the method of his cultural criticism begins to be replaced by some more positively assertory mode. . . .

Etcetera. As a bit of impromptu proselytizing this is merely regrettable. There is something almost amusing in the idea of the Salvation Army establishing a mission responsible for the souls of literary critics. But discernible within Scott's prompting, once again, is his desire to amass forces, to gather recruits, in the struggle against the prevailing nihilism. In his zeal, he would foist upon these writers an outlook not their own, while failing to ferret out what moral lessons truly abide in their work. Surely there is embodied in the books of each a critique, thick with pertinence and insight, not only of our present bleakness of spirit, but of the self-blinding, self-justifying indignation of the previous decade. But most likely it is a critique more subtle and openminded than the moralism of Nathan Scott.

Jewish Jokesters

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—LENNY BRUCE. By ALBERT GOLDMAN. From the Journalism of LAWRENCE SCHILLER. *Random House*. 565 pp. \$10.00.

Reviewed by DOROTHY RABINOWITZ

SEVERAL years after Lenny Bruce was found dead in his bathroom, a needle sticking out of his right arm, Albert Goldman set about to write his biography in collaboration with Lawrence Schiller, a man who had, like Goldman, written a good deal on the subject of Bruce while he was alive. Goldman would retain control over the writing, while drawing on the substantial material Schiller had already written; thus evolved the odd description of the authorship on this book's title page. It is small explanation indeed to learn that Goldman drew on the work of

Schiller, but no matter, for in tone and view, its blend of academic didacticism and street wisdom, the work is peculiarly Goldman's.

It begins with an account of a day in the life of Bruce, during the time when, in the early 1960's, he played the best clubs in New York, the period before his deep troubles with the law had begun. Bruce was, by then, a voracious consumer of drugs, as well as a dedicated member of the drug culture, an *aficionado* to whom the daily search for drugs was as great a necessity as the drugs themselves. But despite certain other signs of his preoccupation, Bruce was still a vital and handsome man (a far cry from what he became toward the end of his life in the mid-60's, when he appeared on stage wrapped in a black raincoat to hide the fact that he had grown fat on a diet of drugs and pistachio ice cream).

With his male nurse and companion, to whom were entrusted the sober tasks of finding veins in Lenny's body that were not yet collapsed and shooting him with drugs, and of keeping awake to provide an audience for Lenny's all-night jags, Bruce found sanctuary in a tenth-rate Times Square hotel when he was in New York working the smart supper clubs. The hotel was peopled by a random assortment of prostitutes, junkies, pimps, and similar morally unfastidious clients, a place where not many questions were asked by the management; but Bruce nevertheless took the trouble to hide his syringes, pills, needles, the whole complicated pharmacology of the addict, putting them piece by piece in various places including in the wall space behind the electric light switchplate where, he reasoned happily, detectives would not like to stick their hands.

The portrait of a day in the life of Bruce, which runs on for some fifty pages, is, for all its seaminess, the strongest section of the work, for it is—and it is a fact one comes to appreciate quite soon—one of the few segments of the book not given to the dissemination of Goldman's sociological views on comedy, culture, and the Jewish family. The rest of the work consists of in-

depth analyses of Lenny's relationship with his wife, Honey, a lady who enjoyed a bisexual identity long before it became all the rage; of Lenny's father; and of Joe Ancis, an authentically Jewish comic so far as Goldman is concerned, and the chief source of Lenny's inspiration as a humorist.

With regard to his rendering of Honey, Goldman is kindly, with the kindness of the detective who has hauled the same prostitute into the station time and again over the years, until he has finally come to have a peculiar sympathy for her, a feeling composed in various parts of revulsion, admiration at her talent for survival, and, not least, gratitude that she and all that she represents are strangers to his own family.

Bruce's attachment to Honey, Goldman explains, had its roots in Lenny's early life. It was Lenny's unhappy fate to be the son of a weak, prim father and an ambitious, flighty mother who loved the stage, and who abandoned her marriage and her son to pursue a vague career as a dancer and occasional barmaid. Lenny was brought up thereafter by his father, an essentially weak (though responsible) man and the object of much of Goldman's analysis of the Jewish family:

What Jewish love really is, I suppose, is the final distillate of the twisted and contorted feelings of a people who have been the most hated race in history. A people who have lived so many hundreds and thousands of years amidst the hate of other peoples that they have absorbed much of that hate. . . . Like a sign in flesh, like a genetic code, this fusion of self-love and self-hate is transmitted from one generation to another.

Thus, observes Goldman, Jewish love was the source of Lenny's self-destructive impulses, for his father was one of those "cancelled" men who emerge from the matriarch-dominated Jewish family. These, these cancelled beings, are men who hate where they should love and love where they should hate; in the end they transmit their distorted love to their children.

Also recorded in the work, and rendered with the specificity of laboratory findings, is the remark-

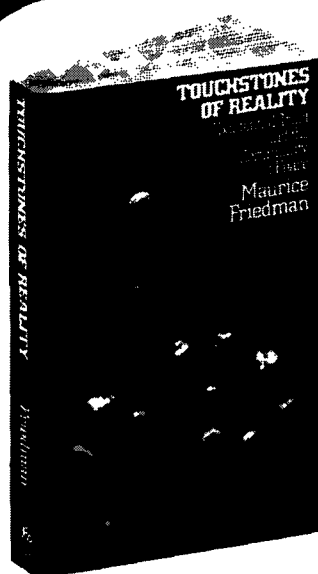
DOROTHY RABINOWITZ, a regular contributor, is the author of *The Other Jews*. She is currently at work on a book about the survivors of the Holocaust.

able sequence of this transmission: "The mother gives it [the distorted Jewish love] back to the son and the son gives it back to the woman he marries and she gives it in turn to his son, or failing that, he plays mother and gives it to his son. . . ." So it is that, in Goldman's view, Lenny Bruce grew up, and lived and died in accordance with that doom which was visited on him at birth; Lenny had no chance, Goldman says, if not in so many words.

SUCH interpretations of a man's life are not, of course, the stuff of which heroic matter is made, but then Goldman is interested in the opposite of the heroic. *Ladies and Gentlemen—Lenny Bruce* is a book about illness, not about talent, and in that respect it is capable of exerting a certain sour fascination on the mind of a reader not already driven to distraction by the winds which blow mournfully but persistently through this work, like the presence of a parson at a revel, reminding him that humor and free spirits may have their power, but that in the end they are subordinate to a higher one. That higher power is the power of pop sociology, a school whose distinguishing feature has never been to require a great deal of intimacy with the subject under scrutiny, but only the possession of a handle or two, to pass on to others, even less knowing.

The source and inspiration of Lenny Bruce's humor, Goldman explains, was the true Yiddish soul of one Joe Ancis, who lived, long past the age when he should have married, with his devoted old parents in Brooklyn, parents who loved him but who crippled Joe with their Jewish love. Goldman sets out in considerable detail the parental teachings. They had, for example, warned Joe not to eat without washing his hands, admonished him not to eat chopped meat in restaurants, told him never to mix whiskey and wine, and to be careful with girls. Parental cautions of such a nature are bound to set a man on the road to ruin, one learns from Ancis's fate; for, Goldman asserts, Ancis became "an emotional basket case."

Still, Ancis had something Lenny Bruce did not have; for one thing, he knew Yiddish:



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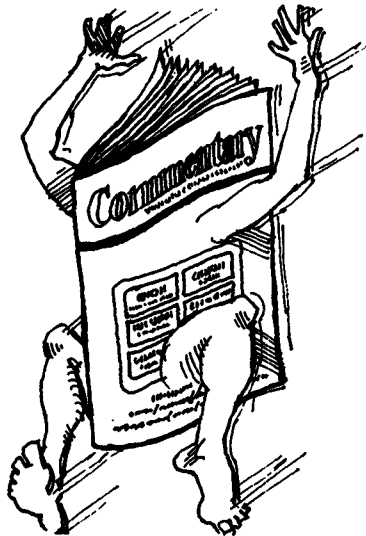
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He knew *all* the words—not just the phrases found in novels written by highly assimilated Jewish writers up at Yaddo. . . . He didn't say "balls," he said *baitzim*. He didn't say "This pot is good stuff," he said it was *richtige waare*. He called a clumsy person a *leahman a getch*. . . .

In addition to this proof of Joe's way with the heart and soul of Yiddish, there was Joe's authentic Jewishness. "Hanging around with Joe," Goldman observes "you got precious insights into Jewish life." Ancis had, for instance, a way of dropping his pants in public:

Ordering Eddie to drive his red convertible through the heaviest bar and taproom section, Joe mounts the back seat and starts slapping his ass, screaming at the astonished black men in front of the bars, "Hey—baby, dig this white ass! Look at this white meat! Potchey, potchey, im tuchus!"

Dropping one's pants in public and yelling, one learns, are related to Joe's origins, and were one of those aspects of authentic Jewishness which later enriched Lenny Bruce's art:

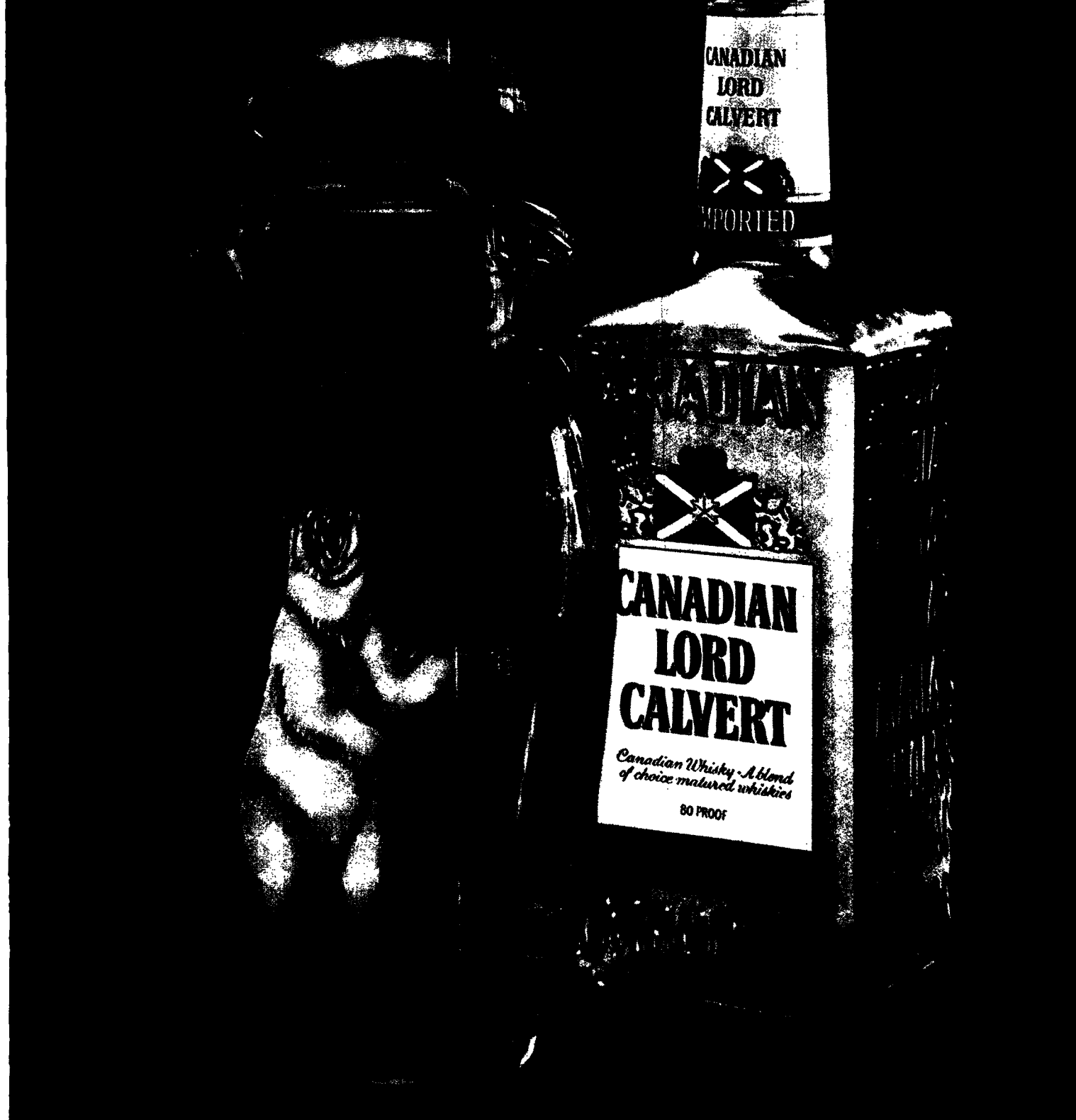
All that bust-out "Let's get naked drop your pants in public" stuff that Lenny later became notorious for originated right back at the beginning of his career when he was hanging out with the Brooklyn Jew boys. . . . Baring your ass, that much-pinched, much-kissed, much bitten, gnawed, coveted, and obsessed-over tusch, toosh tuschie of the Jewish nursery was not, when you get right down to it, a particularly strange thing for a little Jewish boy-man to do when he felt the infantile pleasures of exhibitionism and attention-grabbing. . . .

In his representations of the hipster world which Bruce inhabited, Goldman uses italic type in passages where he wishes to signal his own skepticism about that world, its assumptions, its sympathies, and especially his own connections with all of these as a writer whose aim is to cloak himself with the insider's wisdom while retaining the distance and disinterestedness of the outsider. But

where Bruce's Jewish psychology is concerned, Goldman is all straightforwardness and confidence, a man who has undoubtedly learned that in the relation between pop Jewish culture and its audience, as in all commerce, the advantage lies not with the consumer but with the purveyor, for among the ignorant there is always a hunger to know, and that hunger has no power to distinguish: to recognize that the goods it has purchased are only a form of ignorance different from its own. To an audience whose knowledge of the language is limited to *schlemiehl* and *mazel*, it may follow naturally that a man who can say *baitzim* for "balls" should be acclaimed for his Yiddish; just as, to an audience whose knowledge of Jewish family life derives from Philip Roth, it may come as no surprise now to learn that that life is a ruinous one, and that proof of its ruinousness lies in the way Bruce and Joe Ancis turned out. To such an audience, perhaps; but not to any other.

THIS is a dark, curiously cold book, qualities that cannot be wholly attributed to its subject and his milieu, both of which, to be sure, are cold and dark enough. Yet, if the subject is a monster, it ought to be the work of his biographer to find the man in the monster, and the difficulty with Goldman's perceptions throughout are that they are devoted to finding the monster. There are, it ought to be said, wholly absorbing, "straight" sections of biography here, but they are swallowed up in this overly long work, a good part of which is given over to Goldman's presentation of, and commentary on, whole acts in Bruce's repertoire. The explication of humor is a course which has led many a better man to disaster, and so it is not altogether surprising that certain sections, explaining why particular lines are funny and how, press upon the mind and spirit in much the same funereal way as the long passages on Jewish life and sociology, the successful reading of which is a training in patience good for a lifetime.

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